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The enigmatic career of Vere Gordon Childe: A peculiar and individual manifestation of the human spirit

Peace, William Joseph, Ph.D.

Columbia University, 1992

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The Enigmatic Career of Vere Gordon Childe:
A Peculiar and Individual Manifestation of the Human Spirit

William J. Peace

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

1992

1992

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ABSTRACT

The Enigmatic Career of Vere Gordon Childe

William J. Peace

Vere Gordon Childe (1892-1965), a native Australian, was Europe's foremost prehistorian of the mid twentieth century. During his lifetime the work Childe undertook touched many people and revolutionized the study of man's past. He established his academic reputation as a prehistorian with the publication of five books in as many years. These books--The Dawn of European Civilization (1925), The Aryans (1926), The Most Ancient east (1928), The Danube in Prehistory (1929), and The Bronze Age (1930)--took the archaeological world by storm. Although Childe was undoubtedly a seminal figure in the establishment of the discipline, after his death his contribution to method and theory in archaeology was believed to have little relevance to contemporary archaeological research. Yet in the past ten years no less than three full length monographs and a score of articles have been published which have sought to explore Childe's contribution to method and theory in archaeology.

Characterized by Ruth Tringham as the "let us-know-Childe better movement", the monographs and articles about Childe illustrate that a fundamental change in the way the history of the discipline is written is taking place. More specifically, anthro-

pologists and archaeologists are turning away from Whiggish histories to those studies which seek to contextualize seminal figures and theories in the broader cultural milieu. George Stocking and Bruce Trigger in particular have called for a critical historiography of the discipline in which the details of the past are revealed in as full a context as possible. The expansion and development of the history of archaeology to include more than simply a recitation of great individuals and crucial events to encompass and integrate economic, social and intellectual history, provide an essential background for this thesis. For despite the great interest in Childe's academic career, no single author has yet presented a holistic interpretation of his effect upon method and theory in archaeology nor has a scholar adequately revealed the degree to which contemporary events affected his work.

In acknowledging that contemporary sociopolitical events affected the way in which a scholar such as Childe lived and worked necessitates more than reading the corpus of Childe's writings. A contextual account of Childe's life must therefore be based on new sources of information. These materials, such as the memoirs and letters of Childe's contemporaries, his book reviews, shorter articles and letters to newspapers as well as personal interviews form the corpus out of which I shall draw from for a sociologically informed analysis of Childe's intellectual and political development.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Theoretical Discussion And Literature review

Introduction

A native Australian, Vere Gordon Childe (1892-1957) grew up in an oppressive environment dominated by his father's deeply held religious convictions (his father was a minister in New South Wales). According to those who knew him personally, Childe's upbringing led to an interest in books and a deeply entrenched dislike for established religion (Piggott 1958a&b; Dutt 1957a&b, 1958). From an early age, he developed a private interest in radical politics, yet he never directly rebelled against his family. Indeed, the extent of his personal rebellion consisted of an idiosyncratic form of dress which came to the forefront in 1914 when he attended the University of Sydney.

Childe's presence must have been all but impossible to miss. According to those who knew him, he was at best homely and most believed him to be physically quite ugly. He had a ruddy complexion, thick eye glasses, an unusual posture caused by polio he had had as a child, and an ever present pipe. For most of his life he characteristically wore a World War I surplus oilskin coat, shorts, walking boots, and broad brimmed hats. Childe even had a wager with Herbert Evatt, an Australian labor politician, over who could wear a similar pair of pants the longest. Childe won. He wore the pants for over twenty five years.

Childe was clearly a first class eccentric. In staid Edinburgh he shocked the university administration by attending senate and faculty meetings in the sloppiest attire imaginable

when top coat, tails and academic robes were the norm. When traveling he always went first class, stayed in the finest hotels, ate at the best restaurants, and played bridge with members of high society at the Atheneum Club in London. Yet he also seemed to delight in making those who were conservatively inclined uncomfortable. For example, he prominently carried the British Communist Party paper the Daily Worker with him to various archaeological congresses; or upon leaving Eastern Europe he threw out all his clothes and stuffed two huge valises with hotel pillows thus infuriating custom officials who in turn searched not only Childe but all those with whom he was traveling, specifically his conservative archaeological colleagues--Stuart Pigott, Christopher Hawkes, and Grahame Clark. However, unlike other eccentrics, Childe was by no means socially inept. He had a wide network of professional colleagues with whom he worked throughout his life. Although personally aloof, he also had an active social life. He regularly attended the theater and loved to drive large American cars. He also never bothered to have the steering wheel moved to the left side. Those who were unlucky enough to drive with him all vividly recalled he was a horrible driver and wondered how he avoided a serious accident.

During his lifetime the work Childe undertook touched many people and revolutionized the study of man's past. While Childe is best known in the United States and Europe as the foremost prehistorian of the twentieth century, his first book--How Labour Governs (1923)--was concerned not with prehistory but with the

labor struggle in Australia. Between 1917 and 1922 Childe was deeply involved in Australian politics. In fact, How Labour Governs is considered to be a landmark study in the history of Australian labor studies (Gollan 1964). Although he never wrote the promised sequel to this book, he subsequently established his academic reputation as a prehistorian with the publication of five books in as many years. These books--The Dawn of European Civilization (1925), The Aryans (1926), The Most Ancient East (1928), The Danube in Prehistory (1929), and The Bronze Age (1930)--took the archaeological world by storm.

In the last ten years there has been a renewed interest in Childe's academic career and a fundamental change in the way the history of the discipline is being written. The expansion and development of the history of archaeology to include more than simply a recitation of great individuals and crucial events to encompass and integrate economic, social and intellectual history, provide an essential background for my own work. Despite great interest in Childe's academic career, no single author has yet presented a holistic interpretation of his effect upon method and theory in archaeology nor has a scholar adequately revealed the degree to which contemporary events affected his work (in particular, see Allen 1981; Gathercole 1975, 1976, 1982, 1989; Green 1981a&b; Irving 1988; McNairn 1981; Peace 1988 Perez 1981; Sherratt 1989; Thomas 1982; Trigger 1980, 1982, 1984a,b&c , 1986). These publications, characterized by Tringham (1983:87) as "the let-us-know-Childe-better-movement", thus merely underscore

the need to understand Childe's life and career in broader historical perspective.

In acknowledging that contemporary sociopolitical events affected the way in which a scholar such as Childe lived and worked, one must delve deeply into the most strident controversies surrounding discussions of Childe's academic career, specifically the degree to which he was committed to Marxism. Regardless of their conclusions, all those who have written about Childe would concede Marxism remained a consistent intellectual force throughout his life. However, the political and academic philosophy of Marxism was but one vital aspect of his life. Indeed, the limitations of Marxist theory both strengthened and constrained Childe's intellectual development. Nonetheless, analyses of Childe prove Marxism remained a consistent intellectual measuring rod for him throughout his personal and professional life. In reviewing three monographs about Childe, Peter Gathercole has noted with regard to Marxism, it was not that:

"they [Green, McNairn, and Trigger] show any bias against Marxism, nor that they fail to grasp how seriously Childe viewed it. It is rather that they treat it too academically, too neutrally, as far as he was concerned. They do not emphasize sufficiently how passionate was his philosophical and political commitment to Marxism, and to Socialism, nor what opportunistic tangles he got himself into... They are too kind..." (Gathercole 1982:197)

Clearly Childe's understanding of, and his commitment to Marxism and Left-wing politics, cannot be seen in isolation. At issue then is what sort of "Marxism" did Childe embrace and how did it shape his scholarship? Was Childe's commitment to Marxism

nothing more than an obscene gesture directed toward the Scottish archaeological establishment as some have suggested?¹ He seemed to take some delight in upsetting his conservative colleagues by publicly reading and displaying the Communist Party's paper the Daily Worker. But does this mean he followed a party line in his thinking? Childe obviously identified with the Left and wanted to see a Socialist government take power in Britain and Australia but the extent to which these political leanings were part and parcel of his scholarly career has yet to be fully understood.

Studies based solely on Childe's most cited books and articles are insufficient to address these questions.² An integrated account of Childe's life and works, including an historical understanding of the fields of knowledge to which he made such important contribution is required. To do this, necessitates more than reading the corpus of Childe's writings, for an integrated account of his life must be based upon new sources of information. These materials, such as the memoirs and letters of Childe's contemporaries, his book reviews, shorter articles and letters to newspapers and journals have not traditionally been utilized by intellectual biographers. Therefore, a thorough analysis of his unpublished writings in the form of his voluminous correspondence and his published work not intended for other scholars but for the masses all form the corpus out of which I shall draw from for a sociologically informed analysis of Childe's intellectual and political development.

This material comes from unpublished sources in archives

located in the United States, Britain, and Australia.³ Moreover, I will draw on personal interviews with Childe's former associates, students, and political colleagues with whom he associated. Taken as a whole, these materials provide new ways of understanding Childe's views on theory building and fieldwork, about the relationship between archaeology and the social sciences, and more distantly, the relationship between scholarship and politics. It is only through these sources that one can grasp the inspiration and ethos behind his work.

Outline of Childe's Political Education and Career Questions and Issues

Childe entered the University of Sydney in 1911 where he read for a Classics degree. At Sydney, Childe excelled academically and in 1914 he graduated with first class honors in Latin, Greek, and philosophy. He won the prestigious Francis Anderson Prize for philosophy and the Cooper Graduate Scholarship in Classics which enabled him to continue his education at Queens College, Oxford. Because of the difference between the Australian and British academic years, after graduation Childe had six months to occupy himself before he departed for Oxford. During this period, one finds the first inkling that he was interested in radical politics. According to Herbert Evatt, a life long friend and prominent Australian Labor politician, Childe began to frequent Bertha McNamara's bookshop (Evatt 1940:114). This was the central meet-

ing place of Socialist activity in Sydney and Evatt described the bookshop as:

"a shabby little place in Castlereagh Street, where she sold inflammatory pamphlets, revolutionary literature, and cigarettes in small numbers so that men in lodging down the lane could afford them, you met international socialists like Tom Mann, anarchists, IWW men [International Workers of the World], Bertha welcomed them all..." (Evatt 1940:115)

Childe arrived in May 1914 at Oxford University. World War I broke out shortly after his arrival and during his tenure at Queens College the university was slowly drained of men, most of whom would die in trench warfare. Childe quickly became associated with those on the Left and soon after his arrival at Oxford moved in with Rajani Palme Dutt, a founding member of the British Communist Party. According to the published reminiscences of prominent British Socialists such as David Blelloch, Robert Chorley, Raymond Postgate, and Dutt, between 1914 and 1917 Childe devoted much of his time to learning about the works of Marx and Engels. In fact, according to Dutt, virtually within months of Childe's arrival at Oxford, he became committed to the Left and their "favourite themes of discussion were Hegel, Marx, and Bronze Age and Mycenaean civilization" (Dutt 1957b).

These facts about Childe's tenure at Oxford are well established. But much of his political career at Oxford is still untouched by the standard biographical treatment. For instance, Childe was an active member of the University Socialist Society, an advocate for the No-Conscription Fellowship, and staunchly supported his friends when they were arrested for opposing con-

scription. Later in this volume I will draw upon letters Childe exchanged with the Oxford scholar Gilbert Murray that have thus far been ignored or underutilized by other scholars as an invaluable source of information on Childe's activities in radical politics. Indeed, it will become apparent that Childe's activities at Oxford were critical because he was the only Leftist Oxford student opposed to World War I who remained in residence for the duration of the war (other students who opposed the war were either arrested or expelled from the University). We will discover that Childe's conversion to the anti-war position developed out of his participation in the Oxford University Socialist Society.

While active in socialist politics, Childe continued his education in classical studies, and under John Myres direction, wrote "The Influence of the Indo-Europeans In Prehistoric Greece". Aside from Myres, at Oxford Childe studied under J.D. Beazley, Marcus Todd, Percy Gardner and Arthur Evans. Under these men Childe became familiar with the ancient remains uncovered from the classical civilizations of Rome and Greece. None of these scholars influenced Childe in any profound way. Indeed, his subsequent career is less a credit to his educational background and more reflective of the political experiences which dominated his Oxford education. From an archaeological perspective, he was truly original and self-taught.

Childe graduated from Queens College in 1917 with Greats, the first Australian to receive this honor. After graduation

Childe returned to Australia where he attempted to find an academic post. While those who have written about Childe's return to Australia in 1917, have established he was dismissed from the academic posts he was able to obtain for political reasons, no scholar has analyzed the depth of the political persecution Childe experienced. Utilizing heretofore unavailable documents from the Australian Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorships Reports, I will document that Childe was under close surveillance by the Australian Secret police. In addition to covert surveillance of Childe, the Australian Department of Defense played a major role in getting Childe fired from the two positions he was able to land. The same department was also influential in seeing to it that he was denied a third position. Indeed, because of the Australian Department of Defense's actions Childe was blacklisted from all university appointments. As a result of this political persecution and blacklisting, Childe turned to labor politics as a full-time occupation.

Between 1917 and 1922 Childe was an active socialist intellectual within the Australian Labour Party. He published a host of articles which have never before been analyzed. These unknown articles make the only non-archaeological text he wrote--How Labour Governs (1923)--more intelligible. For these works establish the continuities and important changes in Childe's thoughts before and after the publication on How Labour Governs. Contrary to popular belief, Childe advocated a positive role for the Australian Labour Party in socialist politics.⁴ In fact he came

to understand that the party played an active role in the formation of class, a role that could either bring forward or set back the prospects for socialism.

While it has proven impossible to establish exactly how he obtained the job, in 1921 Childe was promoted and became John Storey's Private Secretary (Storey would later become the Labour Premier). Just a year later, due to Storey's failing health and a reorganization of the Premier's office, Storey promoted Childe to the position of Research and Publicity Officer, a post which took him back to England. Childe's job was to represent the Australian Labour Party to other Labor governments in Europe, prepare press releases, and research new legislation. This was a high profile post, one which was particularly important because the Australian Labour Party had been subjected to a number of attacks on its integrity. The Australian Labor government was therefore anxious to present a positive image of the Labour Government in New South Wales. In 1922, however, within a week of the demise of the Labour Party in Australia, Childe was fired on the grounds that he was a political appointee who was an embarrassment to the incoming Conservative Party.

After his dismissal, Childe remained in England and between 1922 and 1925 pursued a career in both politics and European archaeology. While he kept up his contacts in both fields, he gradually became more engrossed in the study of the past. Archaeological scholarship must have seemed safer to Childe, particularly as the Labour Party faltered badly after 1922 in Australia.

With the help of his Oxford tutor, John L. Myres, in 1925 Childe was appointed as the librarian to the Royal Anthropological Institute. Childe was lucky to have this job as there were precious few paid jobs in archaeology at the time.

Based on Childe's correspondence with Myres, I will demonstrate Childe accumulated an impressive number of rejections which would have disheartened even the strongest of men and women. Even the job Childe found after two years of fruitless searching, the prestigious Abercromby Chair of Prehistoric Archaeology at Edinburgh University, came virtually by default. Childe was neither the first nor second choice for the job. I shall show that in his desperation for this position, Childe rushed The Aryans into publication, a work he was later embarrassed by, because he was convinced it would improve his chances at obtaining this post. By publishing this work, perhaps unwittingly, Childe gave the impression he was "pro-German" thus seriously compromising his political beliefs.

Childe spent nearly twenty years in Edinburgh as the sole chair of archaeology in Scotland. Although personally unhappy, he firmly established his reputation as Europe's foremost prehistorian. Politically, Childe was isolated in Edinburgh. He was ostracized by the Edinburgh archaeological establishment as his politics were suspect and his colleagues were of the view that such a prestigious position should have gone to "a real Scotsman". He also had very few students, for during his tenure in Edinburgh he had only one student graduate with honors.⁵

Childe was always outside the mainstream university politics primarily because Edinburgh University was politically conservative, an issue which came to the forefront in the 1930s.

Already identified with the Left, Edinburgh University officials took little notice of Childe's political beliefs and treated him with benign neglect. The Leftist works Childe published all appeared in newspapers and periodicals such as Plebs published by the National Council of Labour Colleges. There was no reason for conservatives to take exception to Childe's work, particularly since there was very little chance they would even come across it. However, as the 1930s progressed conservatives at Edinburgh could not help but notice Childe's scholarship.⁶ For as the threat of fascism increased exponentially so did Childe's efforts to reach as wide an audience as possible for his work. Therefore, in actively fighting the threat of fascism, Childe joined numerous other scholars who took it upon themselves to counter the pseudo-science of fascist governments with the knowledge of their respective fields to debunk right-wing ideology. I will demonstrate that in becoming a leading anti-fascist figure, Childe's high profile clearly made Edinburgh University officials uncomfortable. Based on personal interviews with Childe's former students and colleagues at Edinburgh, I will prove the university was embarrassed by Childe's virulent stand and went out of there way to make his life uncomfortable. The reason for this is simple, in 1940 it was rumored that in the event of a successful German invasion Edinburgh University officials would have cooper-

ated with the Germans or at least turned in those who were anti-fascists in order to have themselves spared. In fact, based on Childe's correspondence with American scholars, I will establish that during the darkest hours of the war he felt he had only two options--immigrate to the United States or commit suicide.

After World War II Childe had the opportunity to move to London, where in 1946, he became the first Director of the Institute of Archaeology. Childe was happy to leave Edinburgh behind. In London he finally had an opportunity to teach to a large number of students. While not a gifted lecturer, indeed he was by all accounts quite bad, he was genuinely well respected by his students. In fact, Childe went out of his way to help his students through financial problems, contacted people he knew about job openings and wrote seemingly endless recommendations. Prehistorians who studied with Childe at the Institute include Paul Ashbee, John Alexander, Humphrey Case, Peter Gathercole, Henry Hodges, Sinclair Hood, Alison Ravetz, Nancy Sanders, Isobel Smith, and many others. Aside from Ravetz and Gathercole who would identify themselves as Leftists, the majority of his students were conservatives. All of Childe's students went on to have careers that were well with the mainstream.

In London, Childe was also able to spend more time with those associated with the Left. This was particularly comforting during the Cold War, for Marxist scholars such as Childe found themselves increasingly isolated. Childe continued his efforts to reach as wide an audience as possible for his writings which is

evidenced by his participation in the creation of the journal Past and Present. Inspired by John Morris, Childe's role in the establishment of Past and Present is not known outside of those few Marxist historians who are familiar with its original editorial board. Yet as we shall see in later chapters, Childe's involvement in Past and Present was but one example of his dedication to the championship of international scholarly cooperation in the face of political oppression. His actions during this dark era clearly demonstrate the very real political ramifications of scholarly activity; for example, because of his participation in Leftist causes he was denied a Visa to enter the United States. I will also demonstrate that by simply alluding to Stalin in one of his books (History) his work was virtually blacklisted in the United States.

In 1957 Childe gave up his post as Director of the Institute of Archaeology after ten years. His contract was not due to expire until the following year but he stepped down early with characteristic generosity. It was clear the Institute was entering a new era as it was expanding to a much larger building and was going to become more formally associated with the University of London. A poor administrator, Childe realized such a move involved significant administrative responsibilities which he was ill-suited to conduct.⁷

The last two years of Childe's life were climactic. The events of 1956, specifically Krushev's denunciation of Stalin and the crushing of the Hungarian revolt were bruising blows to

his belief in Soviet Communism. Upon his retirement in 1957, Childe received a Festschrift and the Gold Medal of the Society of Antiquaries. By all accounts he was quite touched by these honors. Later in the year he decided to return to Australia where, as we now know, he ended his own life (Childe 1980). Once in Australia, Childe was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Sydney, the same university that persecuted him some thirty five years earlier. While openly honoring Childe, the University and the Australian Department of Defense did not forget about Childe's days as a radical in Australia, for upon his return to Australia he was again placed under surveillance by the Department of Defense. Apparently Childe was still deemed to be a subversive and one must assume was, at the ripe old age of sixty five, considered to be a dangerous threat to the country. While in Australia, he lectured widely, visited old friends, and family, but it was not a happy homecoming. He wrote scathing letters to those he knew in Europe about the nature of Australian society. He was deeply disappointed to find that there was even less socialism in Australia then when he had left in 1922 (Childe 1990).

In Australia, Childe wrote one book (The Prehistory of European Society), and three posthumously published documents: one of which was an autobiographical statement published under the title "Retrospect". This is clearly an intellectual suicide note, for here he tried to sum up his contribution to method and theory in archaeology. Second, a paper entitled "Valediction" in which he

attempted to summarize the way in which he felt archaeology should progress. Third, and finally, a personal letter addressed to his successor, which was accompanied by a memoir that was not to be opened for ten years. Published by Antiquity, Childe outlined his perspective on life in which he concluded:

"I have revisited my native land and found I like Australian society much less than European without believing I can do anything to better it; for I have lost faith in all my old ideals... Now I have seen the Australian Spring; I have smelt the boronia, watched snakes and lizards, listened to the locusts. There is nothing more I want to do here.. Life ends best when one is happy and strong..." (Childe 1980:4)

The Place of Childe in Critical Historiographic Perspective

During his lifetime, Vere Gordon Childe was Europe's foremost prehistorian. After his death in October 1957 he received more tributes than any other archaeologist before him. Archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and socialists from leading institutions around the world wrote about Childe's contributions to varied fields (Crawford 1957; Cruden 1957; Dutt 1957a&b; Morris 1957; Piggott 1958a&b; Rouse 1958; Wheeler 1957; Wooster 1957). Without exception, and regardless of the writers political persuasion, all agreed that Childe was the greatest prehistorian of his day. Moreover, they felt he was a wonderful person, if somewhat aloof. The only voice of dissent came from Mortimer Wheeler who criticized Childe for being a poor administrator.

In "Retrospect", Childe came the closest to summarizing the

impact his own career had, and would continue to have on archaeological method and theory. Despite being published shortly after his death, none of those friends and colleagues who wrote obituaries about Childe seemed to grasp the significance of this document. In his own words, Childe tried as best one can objectively do, to place his career in a broader historical perspective. "Retrospect" is particularly enlightening because Childe concluded that his "contribution to archaeology was not well founded chronological schemes nor freshly defined cultures, but rather interpretive concepts and methods of explanation" (Childe 1958:72). The Prehistory of European Society was, in his own estimation, his greatest achievement because:

"it exemplifies better than any work I know how what everyone will accept as history could be extracted from archaeological finds: whether the particular extract be accepted or not, it should help confirm the status of archaeology among historic disciplines. At the same time it illustrates what scientific archaeology ought in my opinion be like..." (Childe 1958:74)

Clearly, Childe felt the Prehistory of European Society represented his most important contribution because the interpretation of the prehistory of Europe he offered was both scientific and historical. In this work, external stimuli, such as environmental circumstances or the movement of peoples, together with internal economic progress, make the process of change observed by the archaeologist historical. His explanation was scientific because it explained particular events such as the Neolithic and Urban revolutions in terms of known general laws of human behavior. Whereas the traditional format of the various editions of

the Dawn of European Civilization was too restrictive, in this posthumously published work he felt he provided the final answer for his life long preoccupation with the distinctiveness of European culture. The Prehistory of European Society was thus a milestone not because it presented the reader with detailed empirical observations but rather the methodological keys to which the whole of European prehistory could be studied. However, as I will demonstrate, those who have analyzed Childe's career have spent an inordinate amount of energy examining Childe's chronological framework rather than his methodological and theoretical contributions. Childe himself realized his arguments painstakingly worked and reworked rested on questionable empirical ground. Yet he remained enthusiastic about his methodology:

"Now I confess that my whole account may prove to be erroneous; my formulae may be inadequate; my interpretations are perhaps ill-founded, my chronological framework--and without such one cannot speak of conjectures--is frankly shaky. Yet I submit the results were worth publishing..." (Childe 1958:78)

British Interpretations

After Childe's death, the predominant view expressed by British archaeologists in professional journals such as Antiquity, Man, and the proceedings of various archaeological societies, can be grouped in three categories. First, there were Childe's contemporaries who believed his major contribution to archaeology was his empirically oriented interpretation of European and Near

Eastern prehistory--work principally published between 1925 and 1935 (e.g. The Dawn, The Most Ancient East, The Danube in Prehistory). Thus they discounted virtually everything Childe wrote thereafter. Second, British archaeologists believed there was a disparity between Childe's writings, more specifically between his technical works published for fellow scholars as opposed to the "less important" or "insignificant works" intended for the general public. Third, all British scholars, aside from those Childe was actively associated with in Leftist organizations, discounted the importance of Marxism and the Marxist tradition in his work.

With regard to points one and two, Mulvaney explicitly stated that "Childe's permanent contribution to prehistoric research was made between 1925 and 1936. Most of his subsequent publications merely elaborated or modified the old themes" (Mulvaney 1957:94). Stuart Piggott's obituary published in the Proceedings of the British Academy described Childe as a "great synthesist and systematizer who, for the first and perhaps last time, brought the whole field of European prehistory within the grasp of a single scholar's mind" (Piggott 1958a:309). Piggott went on to state that as an archaeologist Childe was "above all the unwearied constructor of chronological schemes, the man who could survey the European science with scholarly detachment and always distinguish the prehistoric woods amid the close set trees of archaeological detail" (Piggott 1958b:77). This perspective is repeated and time again with only the author and wording changed

(Clark 1957b; Cruden 1957; Hawkes 1958; Wheeler 1957).

In the second instance, British scholars maintained a disparity existed between Childe's popular syntheses and his highly technical works intended for other archaeologists. Typically, The Dawn is referred to as a classic technical work, while books such as Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History are characterized as popular presentations.⁸ The so called popular works were dismissed from serious consideration. In splitting off all of Childe's books published after 1935 as well as dismissing those large and fully--documented summaries from his "little" books leads to a grossly misleading interpretation of Childe's archaeological scholarship. In dismissing these works, Childe's colleagues eliminated virtually all his Marxist analyses from serious discussion as they were published principally after 1935 and intended for a wide readership (e.g. Man Makes Himself, What Happened in History).

Throughout Childe's career he used popular presses as an outlet to work through complex archaeological studies, only later developing his ideas in more detail for his archaeological colleagues in professional journals. Given this, Childe's popular and technical work must be examined as a whole, for in analyzing each style of writing one can see the evolution of his thought as well as how a problem, such as the origins of the Indo-Europeans in the 1930s, was treated both as an academic question and a political issue. Thus while Childe was writing "acceptable" technical chronologies of European and Near Eastern prehistory

between 1925 and 1935, he was, unknown to many of his traditional contemporaries, also publishing the results of these chronologies in Left-wing publications such as Plebs and Modern Quarterly.

The impetus for Childe's popular writings, and his emergence in the eyes of his fellow British archaeologists as a Marxist was directly tied to two factors; the rise of Fascism in Nazi Germany and the emergence of publishing houses which produced great quantities of inexpensive books read by hundreds of thousands of people (e.g. Thinkers Library, Watts, Penguin Books). These factors became evident in the mid 1930s and were all but impossible to miss. To his colleagues, most of whom dismissed Childe's Marxist and Leftist beliefs as a peculiar personality quirk, were surprised by the appearance of works such as Man Makes Himself. In their eyes, Childe suddenly metamorphosized into a different creature, one they were ill equipped to deal with. Therefore, rather than seriously grapple with books such as Man Makes Himself they dismissed his popular books as an irrelevant aspect of the corpus of his work. Max Mallowan explicitly wrote that his "little books were the frivolous product of his regrettable Left-wing eccentricity" (Mallowan 1958).

The third issue that British archaeologists grappled with after Childe's death was, and still is, the most problematic--the degree to which Childe was or was not a Marxist. Given the acerbic debate that surrounds not only the degree to which Childe was a Marxist but the more general issue of Marxism and its role in

archaeological theory, it should not be surprising that one of the most often quoted comments about Childe pertains to his Marxism. In Glyn Daniel's editorial which preceded Childe's memoir "Retrospect", he wrote that "the great puzzle of Childe at all times was to what extent he was a Marxist (or a Marrist)" (Daniel 1958:66).

Childe's contemporaries, such as Glyn Daniel, Stuart Piggott, and Christopher Hawkes, who maintained Childe's contribution to archaeology was principally as a synthesizer of archaeological data all but discounted the importance of Marxism to his work. Piggott speculated that Childe experimented with Marxist theories of social evolution periodically and saw in them a model of the past which might prove useful for understanding archaeological data. Yet he also maintained the results of this search was "of course entirely fruitless within the realm of archaeological theory" holding that Childe used Marxist scholarship to offend those conservatively inclined. Because of this, Piggott suggested that Childe as a "shy, idealistic, awkward young Australian" might have seen in communism the "blueprint of society" in which the intellectual enjoyed a higher status thereby avoiding the label "outsider" (Piggott 1958b:305). In the end, Piggott concluded that Childe's professed interest in Marxist philosophy was in reality a "convoluted intellectual joke" used by Childe to shock or offend the audience he was addressing (Piggott 1971:219). Similarly, Mallowan believed Childe "enjoyed his communism as he enjoyed his clothes... he delighted in shocking

people with his opinions which he brandished in front of them with the Daily Worker (Mallowan 1958).

In contrast to Piggott, Daniel has offered a more modified interpretation of Childe's commitment to Marxism. Daniel believed that Childe ventured both sentimentally and seriously into Marxism in search of answers to archaeological problems. Furthermore, Daniel noted toward the end of Childe's life he grew more critical of Soviet archaeological scholarship and because of this Daniel erroneously concluded Childe was also growing tired of Marxism. But this is more indicative of Daniel's ignorance of Marxism rather than a theoretical change on Childe's part. In Daniel's editorial published by Antiquity at the time of Childe's death, he cautioned the reader that it was incorrect to assume Childe was a Marxist archaeologist because his political orientation was Marxist. Yet more recently, some thirty years after Childe's death, Daniel wrote that Childe was "intellectually dishonest: he let his politics affect his archaeological thinking" (Daniel 1986:418).

In sharp contrast to British archaeologists, those with whom Childe associated with on the Left believed he was deeply affected and committed to Marxism. Unfortunately, their commentaries were restricted to brief obituary notices printed immediately after Childe's death. Despite this, there seems to be no reason to doubt their views. For example, John Morris, a good friend and fellow editor of Past and Present, wrote that Childe was one of the "foremost archaeologists of our time and in his

archaeological work he sought to shape Marxist philosophy" (Morris 1957:2). R. Palme Dutt, a close friend and associate of Childe since his days at Oxford, believed Childe "remained heart and soul with the Marxist movement" and argued his grasp of Marxism helped his archaeological scholarship because by its very nature archaeology was compelled to use the methods of Marxism and build up the history of civilization from the material record (Dutt 1957a:13). O.G.S. Crawford, then editor of Antiquity, and committed to the Left himself, offered the most balanced view writing that "though he [Childe] claimed to be a Marxist, he was too great a man and too original a thinker to bear any sectarian label" (Crawford 1957).

American Interpretations

Most American archaeologist agreed with their British colleagues that Childe's major contribution to archaeology was limited to his empirically oriented interpretation of European and Near Eastern prehistory. Perhaps one reason for the acceptance of this view was that Childe's concept of cultural revolutions in prehistory, which were derived from Marxist theory, ran counter to the then American ideal of cultural changes as slow, gradual alterations. Childe's theoretical work was dismissed as unimportant, or was perceived as the product of Childe's "regrettable Left-wing views" (Rouse 1958:82). This belief also held the sole value these theoretical works were as outlines for his

major books, interpreted broadly as technical syntheses; The Dawn and The Most Ancient East, were considered Childean archetypes.

In his obituary of Childe published by the American Anthropologist, Robert Braidwood maintained that "to begin to understand the man, it seems necessary to stress Childe's early training in the humanities, as well as his early commitment to historical materialism" (Braidwood 1958:734). Similarly, Rouse argued there was a "sharp and conflicting dichotomy in Childe's interests and academic approach which was to persist throughout his career" (Rouse 1958:82). Julian Steward believed that Childe was essentially a unilinear evolutionist making it necessary to "distinguish Childe the preeminent archaeologist from Childe the theoretician" (Steward 1951:240). Rouse, Braidwood, and Steward believed that Childe was a humanist who inductively synthesized archaeological data from a historical perspective yet as a socialist was strongly influenced by Marxist theories of cultural evolution. Implicit in their writings about Childe is the belief that he did not balance these two influences successfully and that they were, in short, a hindrance to his academic career.

Braidwood, Rouse, Steward and other American anthropologists and archaeologists characterized Childe as solely a synthesizer of a large body of archaeological data largely because the sociopolitical climate of the Cold War precluded their access to the full measure of Childe's work. Indeed, their contact with Childe himself was severely limited by his poor reputation with the United States State Department. In 1940 Childe was denied a Visa

to enter the country and all attempts to have him visit the States after World War II were unsuccessful. According to Irving, Rouse, Childe was declared persona non grata by the United States State Department in 1945 because of his espousal of Marxian theories and his numerous visits to Eastern European countries.⁹ As I will later demonstrate, Childe's interest in the States was sincere, for he seriously considered immigrating to the United States in the late 1930s. Because the State Department was aware of his existence he was refused entry and during the Cold War his work was actively censured.

While it is difficult to argue definitively that Childe and his published works were blacklisted, there can be no question his Leftist affiliation and writings were poorly received. The impact of the McCarthy era and Congressional witch-hunts on American anthropology has not received extensive treatment.¹⁰ However, anthropologists were clearly affected. Leslie A. White, who was a member of the Socialist Labor Party, felt compelled to write under an assumed name. Julian Steward, on the other hand, was a very cautious man. His work could have been seen as a derivative of Marxist scholarship but he made sure he distanced himself from not only Marxist literature but any author who was even tangentially associated with the Left.¹¹

The impact this era had on Childe is best illustrated by the haphazard way in which his books were reviewed in the States. Of the twenty-two books Childe wrote less than half were ever reviewed in American journals. Indeed, only four--The Dawn of Euro-

pean Civilization, New Light on the Most Ancient East, Social Evolution and Piecing Together the Past--received what could be characterized as extensive consideration in anthropological journals. Childe's two most popular books, Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History, received only cursory reviews and even the American journals associated with the Left, such as Masses and Mainstream, Science and Society, Modern Quarterly, New Freeman, and New Masses, failed to review or discuss a single book written by Childe. By and large, the reviews Childe's work received in American journals were laudatory but they were solely concerned with Childe's technical works. Childe was described as "the most distinguished student of European prehistory" (Hencken 1941:476), "a great prehistorian" (Erich 1959:1140), "no better authority on prehistoric times" (Embree 1940:151), "European prehistory's most distinguished practitioner" (Adams, R. 1958:1249) and "the greatest European prehistorian since Oscar Montelius" (Hencken 1959:287). The vast majority of reviewers concurred with Weinberg's assessment that Childe's greatest "contribution to archaeology were his syntheses, especially New Light on the Most Ancient East and its companion The Dawn of European Civilization" (Weinberg 1954:124).

Childe's theoretical works were thus completely dismissed in America, hence our views of his work are distorted by omission. Indeed, during the Cold War the one theoretical book that was reviewed (History retitled and censored What is History?) was declared to be "nothing more than a cheap piece of Communist

propaganda" (Highet 1953:99). I will later detail the publishing history of this book which provides graphic evidence of the very real political implications of Childe's scholarship during this dark era in American history (in the last paragraph of this work Childe made an oblique reference to Stalin which almost caused not only his book but an entire series of books in which his volume appeared, from being published in the United States).

Renewed Interest in Childe's Career and his Contribution to Method and Theory in Archaeology

After a flurry of obituaries and tributes to Childe published within a few years of his death, his contribution to the development of archaeological theory was largely forgotten. The elaboration and acceptance of radiocarbon dating shattered many of his closely held theories and well worked chronologies. With Childe's cultural chronological framework in tatters, the whole structure of his model for the diffusion of innovations from the Near East to Europe, which had bound together his synthetic framework, came under heavy attack. Colin Renfrew, the current Disney Chair of archaeology at Cambridge, in particular, took Childe's work to task in a series of articles and books on the development of European civilization (Renfrew 1972, 1974; Renfrew, Ed. 1973). Renfrew's own interpretation of European prehistory became the dominant theory and Childe's work was relegated to historical discussions concerned with the development of European prehistory

as a profession.

As the 1970s unfolded, Childe was considered solely a figure of historical interest, particularly as the field was becoming more theoretically oriented. Archaeology was profoundly changed by the development and elaboration of a selfconsciousness movement which still affects, and to a large degree guides the discipline today: the New Archaeology. With the overwhelming concern for theory building, Childe's contribution to the field faded into the past. The rediscovery of Childe's work and the serious discussion of its importance to archaeology in the late 1960s and 1970s is tied to two factors; first the interest in the history of the discipline; second, the renewed interest in the relationship between Marxist and archaeological theory.

Childe's contemporaries, such as Piggott, Hawkes, and Daniel, who discounted the importance of his commitment to Marxism, found the next generation of students turning to Childe's work in an attempt to understand the role Marxism could play in archaeology. Foremost in their minds were not the "Childean archetypes"--The Dawn and The Most Ancient East-- but those so called "little" books many British and American Archaeologists discounted. Young scholars, such as Ravetz and Gathercole began to realize the importance of Childe's own self-appraisal ("Retrospect") in which he believed his most important contribution to archaeology "were the interpretive concepts and methods of explanation".

Two of Childe's former students, Alison Ravetz and Peter

Gathercole, took up this challenge to identify Childe's theoretical contribution and began to write about his commitment to Marxism. Ravetz argued in the Left-wing journal the New Reasoner that when the British Marxist George Thomson protested that Childe failed to treat class conflict as the basic factor in social evolution, he was expressing the opinion of many Western Marxist intellectuals who believed Childe had not "achieved the expected results because he did not try hard enough" (Thomson 1948:158; Ravetz 1959). Ravetz went on to argue that there was a distinction between Childe's Marxism in the 1930s, which she characterized as naive, optimistic and mechanically understood with the Marxism of his later years which was more subtle and creative (Ravetz 1959:60). Ravetz further argued that in Childe's later writings he realized it was not possible to apply Marxist theory to archaeological data directly and he thus attempted to initiate a more productive dialogue between Marxist theories and archaeological fact. For Ravetz, this constitutes Childe's most significant contribution to Marxist philosophy which has yet to be recognized by British archaeologists.

In contrast to Ravetz, Gathercole's writings in the 1970s supported Dutt's observations made after Childe's death, specifically, that Marxism was "a persistent intellectual force from Childe's first book and that it made a logical whole of his work" (Gathercole 1976:5). Gathercole maintained that while Childe's comprehension of Marxism grew more refined, he used this understanding as an analytical tool for interpreting the prehistory of

Europe in a limited manner (Gathercole 1974). Gathercole specifically argues that by stressing the objective function of scientific knowledge in his later works, Childe was moving away from the more flexible Marxist concept of dialectical interaction between the means and the relations of production.

While Ravetz and Gathercole were the first scholars to discuss Childe's Marxism openly, they did not adequately contextualize Childe's use of Marxist philosophy. Ravetz suggested that Childe's Marxism was "mechanically" applied in the 1930s, and then suddenly later in his career, utilized in a more refined manner. What Ravetz did not grasp was the evolutionary character of Childe's Marxism, a development dictated by the times in which he was writing. Childe's "mechanical" Marxism of the 1930s was derived from not a lack of sophistication; rather it took a specific form because it was utilizing Marxist philosophy as an analytical weapon against fascism. While Gathercole contributed an appreciation of Childe's Marxism, like Ravetz, he too failed to connect Childe's Marxism with the sociopolitical climate.¹² The problem in Gathercole's work is that his studies are not well developed. His works are not detailed enough to establish the ways in which the sociopolitical climate affected Childe's theoretical development.

In addition to Ravetz and Gathercole analyses, Soviet archaeologists began to discuss the importance of Childe's work in relation to other "bourgeois archaeologists". According to Klejn, widely divergent opinions have been expressed about the

significance of Childe's work in the Soviet Union (Klejn 1970, 1977). Although the Great Soviet Encyclopedia praised Childe as the "most eminent archaeologist of the twentieth century" (Artisikhovskii 1977:247), Alexander Mongait, in his paper entitled "The Crisis in Bourgeois Archaeology" stated Childe had not succeeded in "overcoming many of the errors of bourgeois science even though he understands that scientific truth is in the socialist camp and is not afraid to call himself a pupil of Soviet archaeology" (Mongait 1961:151). In effect, Mongait's characterization placed Childe among the despised bourgeois empiricists, thereby lumping him together with decidedly non-Leftist British archaeologists such as Daniel, Hawkes, and Piggott. In his forward to the Russian translation of The Dawn of European Civilization, Mongait further stated that Childe deserved the most severe criticism because he was aware of the insights of Marxist scholars and the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, yet did not incorporate them into his work. In short, what seemed to anger Mongait the most was that Childe knew what the Party line was but did not follow it as faithfully as he should have.

In sharp contrast to Ravetz and Gathercole who tried to make a constructive assessment of Childe's commitment to Marxism, some of Childe's contemporaries produced excessively negative and distorted views on the same subject. Foremost among them was Grahame Clark who delivered the first memorial Gordon Childe lecture at the Institute of Archaeology. Clark began his paper by pointing out that Childe "was the most bourgeois person in the

world" and continued on to write in a style that can only be characterized in tone and substance as Cold War anti-communist propaganda (Clark 1976:3-5). Clark attempted to "slay Childe's supposed Marxist ghost once and for all". Clark argued that Childe's work was "inhibited" by Marxism and the "antiquated folk-lore of Karl Marx" (Clark 1976:18). Clark maintained that while Marxism propelled Childe into archaeology it "crippled" his scholarship after 1935. Having dismissed Childe's work after 1935, Clark goes on to discuss prehistory since Childe. For Clark the logical step from Childe's cultural-historical system was the ecological approach involving "the concept of human societies operating as systems, in which every component contributed to the functioning of the whole" (Clark 1976:20). Clark maintained the "ecological approach was not only free from, but was a denial of the dreary determinism of some weaker approaches to archaeology of which Marxism is included" (Clark 1976:29).

Clearly evident in Clark's paper is his lack of familiarity with Marxism, Soviet theory, and politics.¹³ In this regard, Clark is not alone, for the majority of British archaeologists, both during and after Childe's lifetime, were either unacquainted with the principles of Marxism or resolutely anti-Marxist. Most British archaeologists perceived Marxism as political dogma rather than as a historical model (Daniel 1949, 1958). Childe was accordingly particularly unusual in his ability to successfully distinguish between Marxist historical theory, Soviet scholarship, and Soviet politics. But Childe's colleagues were not so

sophisticated, as Stuart Piggott recalled Childe's:

"mission behind the Iron Curtain to bring back the fruits of Soviet and Eastern European archaeological theory and research was unpalatable. He also actively participated in the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. which organized trips for scholars to visit the Soviet Union and disseminated materials from the U.S.S.R. Such activities were thought to be closely tied with communist propaganda, certainly they tarnished his image as a respectable academic" (Interview with Author)

Childe also publicly praised the Soviet government's support which enabled archaeologists in the Soviet Union to conduct major research into sites without commercial or display potential.¹⁴ In doing so, he provoked an attack on Soviet oppression. While Bruce Trigger has shown that Childe's approach differed substantially from Soviet scholarship, Marxism and Soviet scholarship were nonetheless considered identical by the majority of his peers (Trigger 1984a). According to the historian John Saville, the mistaken identification between Marxism and Soviet scholarship damaged the reputation of the former.

"Since Soviet writings in the fields of history and the social sciences, with few exceptions, has been at best uninteresting and at worst a farrago of quotation mongering dogmatism and biased selection, the consequences for the reputation of Marxist studies have been depressing..." (Saville 1975:5)

With specific regard to Clark, Matthew Spriggs (1977) has observed that within Clark's paper Childe's work is grossly misquoted and because of this he renders Childe's viewpoint meaningless. For example, Spriggs cited the following misquote by Clark:

"In his 'Valediction' [Childe] had to admit that while Marxism had once seemed to make intelligible the devel-

opment of each culture it completely failed to explain the differences between one culture and another and indeed obliterated or dismissed the differences observed..." (Clark 1976:18)

The original passage in Childe's work actually reads:

"The **Marrists** [my emphasis] appeal to uniformities of social evolution while it seemed to make intelligible the development of each individual culture to which they applied it, completely failed to explain the differences between one culture and another..." (Childe 1958:72)

Clark asserts the Childe passage demonstrates Childe's "pathetic admission" that "universal laws of social development are far fewer and far less reliable than Marxists before 1950 thought" (Clark 1976:22). However, Childe's original text quoted above has the **Marrists** and not **Marxists** (my emphasis, in Childe 1958:72).¹⁵ Thus the passage Clark mistakenly interprets as indicating Childe's disillusionment with Marxism, in fact refers to the doctrines of the Soviet academician Nicholai Marr.¹⁶ Marr was a Russian linguist with a strong interest in archaeology who studied various Caucasian languages which led him to theorize that language was a class phenomenon. According to Marr, any language could be placed on a hierarchy which could be used as an indicator to identify at what stage a society had evolved to. The Soviet Communist party supported Marrism until 1950 when Stalin denounced it in his book Concerning Marxism and Linguistics. In "Retrospect" Childe clearly and explicitly draws a distinction between Marrism and Marxism and freely states that the former was a perversion of Marxism.

Clark's paper is but one example of the bad blood between

Childe and Clark which dates back to the early 1930s when it was rumored that Clark toyed with the concept of fascism (see Childe's review of Clark's book Archaeology and Society). Childe's Left-wing views and virulent anti-fascist popular writings were not liked by Clark. In fact, Clark was deeply embarrassed that his book From Savagery to Civilization (1946) appeared in the series Past and Present published by Cobbett Press. The series, which I will discuss in detail in another chapter, had a number of authors, Childe included, who were openly Marxist. The animosity between Childe and Clark is still apparent today as Clark refused to be interviewed for this research project writing to me that "he had not a single positive thing to say about the man [Childe]" (personal communication).

Unfortunately Childe's balanced position won him more enemies than friends. Russian critics found Childe's refusal to espouse dialectical laws, and the diminished emphasis he placed on the role of class in culture change difficult to accept. Conversely, for British scholars such as Clark, Hawkes, Piggott, and Wheeler, Marxism, Murrism and Soviet prehistory were all lumped together as a single phenomenon and the difference between them so slight as to enable the former to stand for the latter. Curiously, some older British archaeologists' building on Clark's mistake began to perceive Childe at the end of his career as being somehow anti-Marxist. Childe was nothing of the sort, indeed he was if anything applying and writing about a deeper understanding of Marxist theory at the end of his career.

The implicit or explicit relationship between Marxist principles and political dogma has led almost all those who have written about Childe to devote an inordinate amount of energy analyzing Childe's connection with Soviet archaeologists and comparing Childe's historical materialism to the application of historical materialism in the Soviet Union. Yet most of the statements made about Childe and the Soviet Union miss the point, for there is truly little evidence to show that the main stimulus for the development of Childe's use of historical materialism in the 1930s came from the Soviet Union or that the historical materialism practiced by Soviet archaeologists provided any kind of model for Childe's work. Indeed, as I will argue in another chapter, the increasing materialist and progressive perspective Childe adopted in the 1930s was more influenced by his peers such as J.G. Crowther, Hyman Levy, J.D. Bernal and others.¹⁷

The "let-us-know-Childe-better Movement"

Since 1980 no less than three full scale monographs and a score of articles have been published about Childe's life and academic career (Trigger 1980, 1982, 1984a,b,c&d, 1986; Tringham 1983; Thomas 1982; Allen 1981; Sherratt 1989; Peace 1988, Perez 1981; Daniel 1983; Gathercole 1982, 1989). It has been suggested that a veritable cottage industry has developed around analyses of Childe's career (Murray 1983). Several reviewers of the Childe monographs have questioned the need for such detailed analyses

and some of Childe's former students whom I contacted about being interviewed refused, stating enough had already been written. Simply put, is there some degree of truth in these statements? Is Childe truly the "most scrutinized archaeologist of this century" (Murray 1983:465). And if he is, why? After all how much can be said about one man?

I have tried to make a case that despite all that has been written about Childe, mysteries still do remain. To a degree, the Childe monographs and the numerous articles on different aspects of his career have for the first time provided the discipline with a detailed post mortem of one of its founding figures. Taken together as a body of literature, the "let-us-know-Childe-better-movement" enables us to see Childe more completely as a man and scholar. Yet Gathercole noted that the monographs demonstrate "how much we lack a sophisticated tradition of historiography within British archaeology" (Gathercole 1982:196). Therefore, the analysis of Childe's life and career has opened up profound questions which demonstrate how poorly Childe has been understood in the established literature on the history of the discipline.

All the authors who have written about Childe share a common concern for a fuller understanding of Childe's achievements in his lifetime. Moreover, as a group, they have tried to reveal Childe's potential contribution to present and future theoretical discussion in archaeology. Yet while the three monographs by Sally Green, Barbara McNairn, and Bruce Trigger in particular, and the numerous shorter studies in general, are of high quality,

they do not adequately contextualize Childe's career in a historically grounded sociology of knowledge. McNairn's book is a collection of long essays arranged thematically which tries to redress the lack of attention given Childe's theoretical works. Green's book can be characterized as an attempted full biography of Childe the man: frustrated politician, anti-conscriptionist, and Marxist but does not seriously address his scholarship; finally, Trigger's book is concerned solely with Childe as a thinker within the field of archaeology and traces the development of his work while setting his politics aside.

McNairn's Essays

Barbara McNairn's book, The Method and Theory of V.Gordon Childe is "an examination of the major methodological, theoretical and philosophical foundations" of Childe's thought (McNairn 1980:3). McNairn's systematic examination of Childe's intellectual development, where she takes one topic per chapter, is enlightening because Childe's thoughts were not always so consistent. At times Childe backtracked to take up old ideas seemingly forgotten (e.g. diffusionism) and he was also far from "linear" in his philosophical development. This compartmentalization of Childe's work might be best suited for, or characterized by, the Macdonald series "What they really said". In short, McNairn succeeds at one level, specifically as a book for those who wish to understand the main concepts which pervaded Childe's work.

Her thematic approach, however, has several shortcomings. For instance, at no point does she mention where Childe worked as an academic, or the degree or position he attained, who his professors and mentors were, or his personal background. While these facts can easily be gleaned from various biographical sources, they are crucial issues for an attempt to place a figure such as Childe in the broader sociopolitical climate. For example, in her discussion of Childe's Marxism, McNairn never considered the significance of being identified with the Left during the Cold War. In this era it was no small academic matter to be committed to Marxism and academics certainly changed their writing style so they could avoid being persecuted. In addition, none of Childe's outwardly political stances on issues such as the origin of the Indo-Europeans, are discussed outside of his most detailed scholarship. Without examining the impact the rise of Fascism had on the intellectual atmosphere one is left with an extremely limited view of Childe's interpretation of European prehistory.

Throughout McNairn's book Childe's political writings receive very little mention, from his first book, How Labour Governs (1923), to his several important articles and letters in Plebs, Labour Monthly and New Statesmen. McNairn's analysis of Childe thus closely resembles many of Daniel's "whiggish" histories of archaeology in which historians of anthropology and archaeology have paid attention to only great inventions and significant theories with no reference whatsoever to the factors

that shaped their development. This work then is an old fashioned study in which Childe's development is seen to have evolved in isolation from its time and his life seemingly progressed in a linear direction moving from point A to point B.

Green's Personal Treatise

Sally Green's book, Prehistorian: A Biography of V. Gordon Childe, is at the most general level a biography of the man who was a supreme creative thinker and writer on broad issues of man's humanity and his past (Green 1981b). Here Green addresses the personal side of Childe painting a poignant picture of a sincere, physically ugly, passionate thinker who was lonely and ultimately little understood. In so doing, Green undertook what was an exceedingly difficult task, for Childe was an illusive person. Green's attempt to understand Childe more personally was made problematic by the paucity of conventional biographical material (i.e. no personal private papers, no intimate friends, no descendants). Green turned this difficulty into an advantage, for she was the first scholar to approach Childe as a historical figure. Unlike McNairn, who represents Childe solely as an academic figure, Green carefully unraveled the chronology of Childe's personal activities and his departure from Australian politics. Finally, Green delves into, and as definitively as one can, established why Childe committed suicide. His death had always caused controversy but since 1980, with the publication of

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his suicide note, it became more understandable. With hindsight Childe's suicide emerges as a logical conclusion to a career in which theory and practice were indissoluble; an elegant, though ultimately cold, affirmation of Childe's faith in the creative force of mind and society.

Green's success in uncovering the personal aspects of Childe's life was not without a cost, for she was unable to adequately discuss Childe's academic work. Childe's scholarship was indelibly tied to his personal life and beliefs and in ignoring the academic side of Childe, Green presents half of the story of his life. The details that Green focused on provided insight on his complex character, yet are not successfully integrated with the content and context of his work. There can be no doubt that Childe's personal motivations were at least as crucial in the formation of his archaeological theory and it is unfortunate that Green did not take the next step and link the personal and professional aspects of the same man. The reason for Childe's interest in European prehistory as well as his concern for a relevant, objective and political archaeology which would appeal to the layman and professional is not considered. At another level, and more political in the truest sense of the word, Green does not adequately detail Childe's activities as an anti-fascist, a British Labour party politician. While she utilized the resources available to her. Although she refers to the Gilbert Murray papers, Childe's move from politics to archae-

ology and the political persecution he faced does not come through in her analysis.

Trigger's Revolutions

Bruce Trigger's book, Gordon Childe: Revolutions in Archaeology, is an intellectual history of Childe's academic writings (Trigger 1980). Following Childe's development as a scholar, Trigger's book is arranged chronologically, starting with an analysis of The Dawn and ending with the posthumously published The Prehistory of Europe. Trigger follows general themes in Childe's work as they develop such as "Prehistoric Economics", "Scottish Archaeology", "Human Progress and Decline", "Archaeology and Scientific History", "The Prehistory of Science", and the "Sociology of Knowledge". Like McNairn, and in contrast to Green, Trigger completely ignores Childe's personal life and focuses exclusively on Childe's academic development. Trigger firmly places varied aspects of Childe's career in disciplinary context, yet ignores all fields outside the narrow confines of archaeology. Trigger succeeds in grouping Childe's subsequent works under the aforementioned rubrics thereby establishing the thread in Childe's archaeology as Trigger sees it--a convincing explanation for the phenomenon of civilized Europe.

While Trigger comprehensively covers the field of prehistoric archaeology, the rigid exclusion of important, indeed critical, subsidiary questions which surround the sociology and historiog-

raphy of archaeology during the period under discussion as well as the lack of balance in his attempt to sum up his work weaken the impact of his analysis. For example, in his attempt to analyze Childe's first archaeological text, The Dawn, Trigger undervalues the limitations of archaeology in the 1920s. There were only small or partial excavations, seldom stratified, of sites; graves with grave goods, and finds of single artifacts or hoards of them. In short, the sum of archaeological evidence in situ was relatively feeble and prehistoric archaeology was little more than an antiquarian stamp collecting exercise for the upper classes. There was certainly precious little theory to explain the process of cultural development. Thus Childe's contribution in The Dawn was even greater than Trigger estimated in that he advanced theoretical discussion in a field where the necessary empirical data was still very weak.

Clearly a balance between Green's and Trigger's approaches is called for. For example, Green devotes an entire chapter to Childe's "Turning Point" from Australian politics to archaeology, while Trigger's discussion of the same issue is dealt with as follows:

"When Storey died in 1921 Childe found himself without a job and was unable to secure a university post, apparently because of his political activities. After a brief spell of government employment, he again found himself out of work and in London. His thoughts now turned to a career in archaeology..." (Trigger 1980:34)

In failing to consider issues outside the field of European archaeology Trigger does not portray Childe as a thinker in the context of the times. Trigger does not even consider Childe's

role in various congresses where Childe was often a central figure (usually at the center of some sort of controversy). Indeed, Childe's participation at the 1936 Prehistoric Congress tells us more about how his politics affected his archaeological theory, an event which is not mentioned in Trigger's book (Childe actively tried to have Nazi theorists banned from the conference).

Conclusion

The figure of Gordon Childe dominated the field of prehistory in the middle of this century. He was certainly the most famous prehistorian of his generation, both to fellow professionals and the general public. His interests were extraordinarily diverse, ranging from detailed synthetic prehistories and innovative methodology to pioneering considerations of archaeological theory and epistemology. During his lifetime archaeology became firmly established as a reputable discipline, with the potential to provide a unique perspective on human action. The great themes of his work--the distinctiveness of Europe and the role of archaeology--compelled him to look much more closely at the nature and purpose of the discipline than had others. His willingness to use a historical materialist perspective and his concerns with theory and philosophy were uncharacteristic of archaeologists of his era who were mired in chronology and typology.

Childe was also controversial. Always surrounded by political

prejudice, his excursion into Australian politics, which he sometimes characterized as "sentimental", was anything but. He made a concerted effort to find a constructive role in Australian labor politics, only to be fired when the Labour Party was defeated in the election of 1922. He was politically persecuted by the Australian Department of Defense and was blacklisted from university employment. His political and philosophical stance was far enough to the Left for Stalin's works to receive approbatory citation, even during the Cold War when such a mention could cause serious repercussions. Indeed, because of this he was denied a visa to visit the United States because of his Leftist affiliations. He was both a theorizer and political activist; this duality affected his archaeological interpretations, for he abandoned his early belief in the autochthonous development of ranked societies in temperate Europe because it became a useful part of the Nazi interpretation of prehistory.

The studies already completed about Childe's life do not provide a definitive portrait of the man as the world in which he lived shaped him. Rather they have laid the ground work for not only an intellectual history of Childe but for other influential leaders in the field in which both personal influences and prevailing ideologies receive detailed attention. For the moment then, enigmas still cling to our perceptions of Childe, and it is exactly these unknown aspects of his life and career which I will shed some light on in this study.

Notes

1. Those who knew Childe in Edinburgh all recall the deep animosity between Childe and the conservative archaeological establishment in Scotland. In reviewing Childe's book Scotland Before the Scots (1946), published the year he left Edinburgh, he was viciously attacked by Scottish prehistorians for placing Scottish prehistory firmly within an evolutionary sequence straight out of Lewis Henry Morgan and Soviet archaeological theory. According to those who knew his antagonists such as Cruden, Piggott, and Stevenson this work was written simply to infuriate conservatives in Scotland.
2. Childe's scholarly output was massive by any standard. In just thirty five years he wrote 22 books, many of which were completely re-written, over 300 articles, and at least 800 book reviews. See Childe's bibliography which is more comprehensive than that printed by Green, McNairn, and Trigger but is by no means complete.
3. See bibliographic essay for a more thorough description of the archives utilized.
4. See Gollan 1960, 1964; Smith 1964.
5. Childe has been unfairly criticized for not establishing a school of archaeology in Scotland in his almost twenty years in Edinburgh. The type of students that went to Edinburgh were not comparable to those who attended Oxford and Cambridge University, the only other institutions in England which had chairs of archaeology established. At Edinburgh the students Childe was

exposed to were principally from working class families who wanted at least one member of their family to have some form of higher education.

6. Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History sold over 250,000 copies together in their first five years. In addition, each book has been reprinted dozens times.

7. The Institute of Archaeology was housed at St. John's Lodge inside Regents Park. The Institute was relocated to its present location at Gordon Square. Childe's inability to adequately administer even routine paperwork was widely known, if not legendary. When he resigned Childe bitterly fought to limit the term of his successor, W.F. Grimes to one year. Childe did not believe Grimes' scholarship merited his appointment to the Directorship. Childe lost this battle, in fact, according to J.D. Evans, Childe's opposition to Grimes' placement actually enhanced Grimes' image in the eyes of the University of London.

8. Some British scholars maintained a dichotomy existed in Childe's writing. Childe himself did nothing to dispel this myth (Childe 1941, 1951, 1956). The problem with establishing such a fact is that there is wide disagreement over exactly which books are "popular presentations" and which are "scholarly works". For example, most of Childe's colleagues would consider Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History as popular books. Glyn Daniel and Stuart Piggott would include Social Evolution, Progress and Archaeology, and The Prehistory of European Society yet not all would agree with such a division.

9. According to Rouse, Childe's participation at the 220th Anniversary Celebration of the Soviet Academy of Sciences held in Moscow and Leningrad in 1945 was his most grievous violation.

10. For a thorough discussion of the impact the Cold War had on American colleges see Schrecker's book No Ivory Tower (1987) and Lewis's book Cold War on Campus.

11. Steward had good reason to try and distance himself from not only Marx' and Engels' scholarship but other anthropologists such Childe and White who were associated with the Left because he derived some of his income from the Smithsonian Institute, a governmental institution (for commentary on Steward's career and the Cold War see Murphy 1991).

12. A notable exception to this is Gathercole's analysis of Childe's writing in 1933, particularly as it pertains the evolution of Childe's thought from the publication of "Is Prehistory Practical?" to Man Makes Himself.

13. According to Gathercole who attended Clark's lecture, he admitted to him he had read very little of Marx's work and had no interest in it at all (personal communication).

14. See Childe 1940, 1942, 1943, 1945.

15. Of course this could be a simple misprint of Childe's writing but I sincerely doubt it.

16. Childe was first exposed to Marrism when he visited the Soviet Union in 1935. By 1950 he was very well aware of the difference Marrism and Marxism.

17. These were the same men who would attend the 1931 conference

termed a five day wonder by the Manchester Guardian. Here I refer to the Second International Congress on the History of Science and Technology held in London.

Chapter 2

Political Activism, Persecution and Agitation

Introduction

In reviewing his impact on the field of archaeology, Gordon Childe wrote that prior to his involvement in European prehistory he had made a "sentimental excursion into Australian politics". Most authors who have written about Childe either dismiss this "excursion" or accept what was published at the time of Childe's death in 1957. Therefore, those interested in political theory have looked solely at Childe the labor politician, while archaeologists have dismissed his entire political career, despite the fact that Childe was thirty-five when he obtained his first paid position in the field of prehistoric archaeology. In spite of this dichotomy in Childe's early career, his transition from being an Australian politician to archaeologist can be explained in logical and progressive terms. For two factors were involved; first, his belief in the distinctiveness of Europe, and second, his lifelong concern for the practical use of archaeology. These concerns led him to write in the preface to his first archaeological book, The Dawn of European Civilization (1925), that Europe was "a peculiar and individual manifestation of the human spirit". In this brief and concise statement, unwittingly perhaps, he summarized what was to be the principal aim of his entire archaeological career--the explanation of the origin and development of European civilization.

Although Childe's preoccupation with delineating the nature and antiquity of a distinctive European sociopolitical and economic structure appears odd for an Australian, it makes sense in

view of what is now known about his political views and experiences. In short, he was seeking an explanation in historical terms of the paradox in which he and millions of others round the globe found themselves. For European society was a bastion of rational and scientific thought, individual freedom, and human dignity. Yet it was also the embodiment of power, enslavement, persecution, and inhumanity.

By the time Childe left for England in 1922, where he would spend the rest of his working life, he had already experienced both the worst and best aspects of political and academic life. These early experiences were crucial to his intellectual and personal development. At issue then are Childe's political activities before he became Abercromby Professor of Archaeology in 1927. In discussing these activities scholars have focused on a host of issues. For example, Jim Allen (1981) argues that Childe was disillusioned with Australian politics by 1921; in contrast, Gathercole (1989) maintains that Childe saw an open ended future for himself in the early 1920s as either an archaeologist or a revolutionary politician; Terry Irving (1988) has shown that Childe's contribution to Australian labor politics has been grossly misunderstood by labor historians.¹

While most of Childe's movements are well documented by these scholars, the degree to which Childe was politically persecuted is not known. It is important, therefore, to detail, first, his movements at Oxford from 1914 to 1917, where he was active in the anti-conscriptionist and socialist movements; secondly, his

movements in Australia from 1917 to 1922, where he was deeply involved in labor politics. For there Childe was exposed to covert political persecution the extent of which has yet to be fully detailed.

Oxford and the Anti-conscription Movement

It is difficult to establish how well versed Childe was in Marxist scholarship prior to his attendance at Oxford. According to Davidson (1969), between 1900 and 1915 Australian Marxism was "crude, much of which was derived from pamphlets published in the United States".² The writings of Marx and Engels in Australia were not widely available at that time; only the Communist Manifesto, Capital, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, and Socialism were on the reading list of the Socialist Labour Party and possibly read by Childe. Despite these limitations, there can be no doubt that when Childe arrived at Oxford in 1914 he was perfectly situated to greatly extend his readings in Marxist classics.

While at Oxford Childe received a classical education in prehistory, but his tenure as a student was overshadowed by war time conditions in Britain. In fact, there is no evidence that his archaeological thinking was deeply influenced by his mentors at Oxford. Already interested in philosophy and the works of Marx and Engels, at Oxford Childe quickly surrounded himself with others who were committed Socialists.³ For example, he joined

the Oxford University Fabian Society, whose other members included R. Palme Dutt, David Bluelloch, Robert Chorley, and Raymond Postgate, to name a few individuals who would go on to become important figures in British socialist politics.⁴ The published reminiscences of these men document the fact that between 1914 and 1917 Childe became well acquainted with the works of Marx and the Marxist tradition. Dutt, in particular, went to great lengths to emphasize how committed Childe was to the Left and wrote on several occasions that at Oxford their "favourite themes of discussion were Hegel, Marx and Bronze Age and Mycenaean civilization"(Dutt 1957b).

Whether Childe became committed to Marxian analyses at this early date is open to debate, but there is no doubt he was at the very least well aware of the current Marxist principles of thought and action. Yet Childe was also "reluctantly convinced that, for me, orthodoxy was impossible intellectually" (Childe, quoted in Green 1981b:31, circa 1915). As I will illustrate, Childe could adhere to no formal political dogma as he witnessed how his friends were politically persecuted simply for their participation in organizations such as the No-Conscription fellowship.⁵

World War I was declared shortly after Childe's arrival in Oxford in 1914. He was not initially against the war, for according to Queen's College records he participated in "Drilling with Civilians".⁶ By 1916, however, he was openly and actively opposed to the war and the conscription of British citizens. Clear-

ly, his anti-war views were influenced by his participation in the Oxford University Fabian Society and the Oxford University Socialist's Society (OUSS), which split off from the Fabian Society in 1917 partly because of differences concerning the war.⁷ As secretary of the OUSS, and with most of his friends in the No-Conscription Fellowship, Childe came to identify with the position held by the Socialist Party. Socialists argued that capitalists and the ruling classes made wars and expected the working classes to fight them. Those in the Socialist Party were not necessarily pacifists, but rather believed that national wars were unimportant in comparison to class war. Their belief that the Germans were not entirely to blame for the war enraged the majority of the British public.⁸

In a letter to Herbert Evatt which was probably intended for publication, Childe clearly outlined his views which are entirely in keeping with the Socialist Party.⁹ Childe's opposition to the war, and his contempt for the censorial and propagandist activities of the government is well articulated. According to Childe, the allies shared equal blame with Germany for the horrors of the war. He believed that Germany was arming for war but so too were the allies. In singling out Germany for the sole responsibility of the war the allies were attempting to justify the complete destruction of the German nation. The truth, Childe wrote, was that war was thrust upon Germany by the imperialists of each warring nation and the real enemy was within each country. This was a dangerous claim as in England and Australia it was illegal to

speaking out against the war or the allied powers. In fact, it was the allies aggressive violation of people's civil liberties that led Childe to question whether the government was telling the truth. This infuriated Childe who wrote "surely the truth could never be imperiled by free discussion and could not need be defended by a new Holy Office" (Childe to Evatt 1916). Childe went on to conclude:

"In the circumstances, then, it seems the duty of a free man to stay at home and fight for the retention of the remnants of liberty there rather than allow himself to become an instrument of capitalists and diplomats... the peril is now from within; from home-grown junkers and bureaucrats, capitalists, and profiteers. To fight them is a harder and bitter task for it means opposing the mass of public opinion as it is manufactured by an unscrupulous press and a wicked censorship..." (Childe to Evatt circa 1916)

Childe's activities in the anti-conscriptionist movement are of particular importance because he was one of the few students associated with the movement who remained in Oxford for the duration of the war. As an Australian, Childe was not subject to arrest for illegal protest as were British citizens. Virtually all those who opposed the war were at some point either arrested or expelled from the university. Childe described his experiences and activities at Oxford in the following manner:

"Throughout my course at Oxford, I was connected with the Socialist movement and as a result, after conscription had been introduced, and many leading socialists imprisoned, I became reluctantly convinced that the high claims of the ????? were not sufficiently sincere to justify a continuance of this present conflict [WWI]. I took an active part in the Conscientious Objectors movement, worked as a volunteer during vacation for the National Council of Civil liberties, was secretary of the Oxford University Socialist Society,

President of the Oxford U.D.C. and a delegate to the Leeds Conference in June 1917. At this time many of my friends were in prison for opposition to militarism and I was inclined to stay in England and join them..." (Childe Sept.8, 1918: Bodleian Library Archive)

Conscription for British citizens was introduced in January 1916 under the Military Service Act.¹⁰ This was the first time in British history that regular military forces were recruited against their will. Under this act, all unmarried men or widowers without children dependent upon them, between the ages of eighteen and forty-one, were "deemed" to have enlisted into the military. Unless exempt for health reasons, conscientious objectors were arrested, tried at public tribunals, and often spent the rest of the war in military prisons under extremely harsh conditions.¹¹ According to personal accounts, these public tribunals were kangaroo courts in which the guilt of conscientious objectors was assumed well before they appeared (Kellog 1919; Graham, J. 1923). Indeed, it is clear that torture was practiced in government prisons. According to Adams and Poirier (1987), the physical assaults included confinement in a pit half full of water, beatings with scrubbing brushes and clubs, systematic kicking, and whippings. More generally, practically any speech or publication which was deemed objectionable by the government was under the Military Service Act prohibited on the grounds it was likely "to negatively prejudice the recruiting and moral of the troops" (Graham, J. 1923).

In 1916, a number of Childe's friends were arrested as deserters under the Military Service Act following their failure to

report for active military duty. Childe staunchly supported his friends when they were persecuted for their anti-conscriptionist activities. Those arrested who were close friends of Childe included David Blelloch, P.T. Davies, W.B. Stott, and R. Palme Dutt.¹² The usual procedure followed by conscientious objectors was to plead for exemption from active military service because of their political beliefs. Davies, Stott, and Dutt made such pleas and were arrested and placed in military prison. A number of conscientious objectors who were arrested after making such a plea were abused by military officials. One such case involved the forcible feeding of Emmanuel Ribeiro who went on a hunger strike after his arrest in 1917. After a year of being forcibly fed in a military prison he was released near death. Others did not survive the brutal treatment at the hands of military personnel. According to Graham, no less than seventy-three conscientious objectors died in various military prisons established between 1916 and 1919 (Graham 1923:312-325).

Childe was clearly distraught when Dutt was arrested in the early part of 1916, and accompanied Dutt on his way to prison. The following day Childe wrote to Gilbert Murray telling him of Dutt's fate.¹³ In Childe's respectful and artful letter, he asked Murray for help. While Murray did not agree with the anti-conscriptionists or conscientious objectors, as a humanitarian he was appalled at the treatment these young men had to endure because of their refusal to back away from their beliefs. He unsuccessfully tried to mediate a solution between the military

and the anti-conscriptionists. He wrote to the prison commissioner requesting leniency for Dutt and other conscience objectors. In a letter published by the Tribune newspaper Murray wrote:

"As one who has done his best to help conscientious objectors, who has tried to understand their position, who realizes the suffering, both mental and bodily, to which they have willingly submitted for conscience' sake, and the great courage with which in some cases they have faced persecution, I venture to make an earnest appeal to those now in prison, that when they are invited to undertake work of 'national importance' they will not refuse... Why do I plead in this way or care so much what the objectors do? Not because of the actual amount of help they can bring the country; but for two reasons. First, I respect and value these people with extra sensitive consciences and imperious ideals; I am on their side as against those who decide against them. And therefore I cannot bear to see them behave in a manner which savours less of brotherly love than of insatiable pugnacity, and tends to bring idealism itself into disrepute. And secondly, like most Englishmen, I hate to see decent people punished like felons..." (Murray 1916)

Childe appealed to Murray in the belief that he could influence the court to commit his friends to a Civil rather than military prison. At worst, Childe believed that if influential men such as Murray wrote on behalf of prisoners their treatment might not be as harsh as was rumored. Shortly after Dutt's arrest, Childe again wrote to Murray that Dutt was:

"threatened with floggings when he gets to [the military] prison...they have given him lurid pictures of the conditions of detention barracks. I found out from him that corporal punishment is most expressly forbidden by the Army but he emphasizes the fact--which I can't deny--that there is terribly little check on the authority of the local commander..." (Childe to Murray June 5, 1916: Bodleian Library Archive)

In 1916, R. Palme Dutt was tried under the Military Service Act, found guilty, and imprisoned. He spent most of the next two

years in Aldershot, Winchester, and Wandsworth military prisons. Two other friends of Childe, P.T. Davies and W.B. Stott, were arrested shortly after Dutt. Again, Childe wrote to Murray pleading for his assistance and expressed concern over their fate. Childe wrote in regard to Davies and others in detention at Wandsworth Barracks that:

"the army order about civil prisons applies only to 'imprisonment' and not 'detention'. A reference to the order confirms this. It looks then as if the order was being evaded by an appearance of leniency. If one believed that the threats mentioned by Dutt about the conditions of the detention barracks have even a substratum of fact, one might infer that certain militarists think they have a better chance of breaking men by this machine than even penal servitude while the army order is used as a sop to public opinion and seeming leniency as a cloak to evasions and brutalities. All this might quite well go on while the higher authorities, engaged in more urgent matters, remained in complete ignorance and sincerely intended to avoid needless and useless barbarism..." (Childe to Murray circa June 1916: Bodleian Library Archive)

In contrast to the way his friends were physically abused, Childe himself fared reasonably well. Under the Australian Defense Act of 1909 and 1910, had he been home, he would most likely have been dismissed from military service because he was physically unfit (Forward and Reece 1968). According to Angus Graham (1981), Childe had had polio as a child and was subject to respiratory infections. Perhaps because of this, he redoubled his efforts on behalf of his friends. It took considerable determination on Childe's part to stand up to the taunts and vilifications of the majority of Britons and express his views in favor of his friends in no uncertain terms. In March 1917 Childe wrote to Murray that his scholarship was ending when he took Greats in

June, but he could not in good conscience accept national employment because it would:

"indirectly assist in the prolongation of this senseless slaughter and to ??????? at the complete destruction of liberty and justice and the continued persecution of the finest men I have ever had the honor of meeting. I can not well remain deliberately in a country to resist its laws and unless something turns up I shall presumably have to return to Australia where there are still some vestiges of freedom. This means abandoning all hope of any academic career & the social exit of a political heretic..." (Childe to Murray March 17, 1917: Bodleian Library Archive)

Clearly, Childe was angry. He had every right to be outraged and distressed over the treatment his friend received. He also appeared to be depressed as he wrote to a friend that:

"In the face of such callous brutality dooming the world to years more of agony beside which the most callous vile murders and rapes seem acts of gentle virtue, one's faith in rules and indeed humanity is finally shattered, and one can well believe that the extinction of the blasted species some seem so devoutly to desire would be a well-deserved fate..." (Childe to Jones March 29, 1917: Institute of Archaeology Archive)

The ultimate cost of World War I in terms of money and lives is staggering even by today's standards. The estimated direct cost of the war according to Langer(1974) was \$180 million. The loss of lives for the victorious and defeated powers alike was overwhelming. Reasonable (if such a term applies) or conservative estimates of the loss of life is mind boggling: Germany suffered 6.6 million casualties, France 2.8 million, and Russia 9 million. Great Britain, excluding Scotland and Ireland, sustained casualties of 3 million (Cruttwell 1964). Childe was so repulsed by this loss of life, not to mention the loss of civil liberties, he

concluded he could not remain in England.

The Political Persecution of an Anti-conscriptionist

Childe's views of Australia were fixed by his encounters with class and politics between 1917 and 1922. In preparation for his return home in June 1917, Childe wanted to make sure he would not end up in the same situation that Dutt and his other friends found themselves. He thus wanted to avoid arrest for his anti-conscriptionist beliefs at all costs. Accordingly, Childe wrote to the Australian High Commissioner about his concern that he might be drafted into military service.

"Having now finished my studies at this university, I may want to return to Australia in June after my finals. I have, however, heard the rumour to the effect that to obtain a passport one has to give an undertaking to join the army on arrival in Australia. As I could under no circumstances give any pledge which might involve my helping, however indirectly, in a war which I believe to be destructive to civilisation and true liberty instead of working for immediate peace, I should be glad to know if I have been rightly informed..."(Childe to High Commissioner March 1917: Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

This letter was to have grave consequences for Childe's future. For while he received the assurances he was seeking, the letter was used against him at least three times to deny him academic positions for which he was eminently qualified. It also figured prominently when he was fired from the one position he was able to obtain. By 1922 Childe's contempt for the illiberal intellectual behavior of the professors who worked in conjunction

with military censors and had a part in his political persecution was clearly evident.

The issue of conscription followed Childe to Australia, where in 1917, Prime Minister Billy Hughes had attempted to introduce conscription months earlier. The issue split the Labour Party right down the middle and the prime minister remained in power by allying himself with the Liberal Party to form a new pro-Conscription National Party which defeated Labour in the elections of 1917. When Childe arrived in Australia at the end of the year he was put under surveillance by the Department of Defense, Military Intelligence. His letter to the Australian High Commissioner rendered him officially suspect. ¹⁴

Based in Sydney, Childe immediately became deeply involved in the anti-conscriptionist movement. He joined and became assistant secretary of the Australian Union of Democratic Control for the Avoidance of War (AUDC), which advocated democratic control of foreign policy and the total abolition of conscription and compulsory military training. An outspoken critic of the Hughes government, Childe took a leading role in opposing its attacks on civil liberties. His involvement in the AUDC provided the University of Sydney officials with an excuse for removing him from his post as senior resident tutor of St. Andrews College. He was deemed too radical to be a responsible tutor. The "ammunition" the University used against Childe came from the Department of Defense, Military Intelligence.¹⁵

During the Easter of 1918 Childe attended the Third Inter-

State Peace Conference convened by the AUDC in the Friend's Meeting House in Sydney. He gave an address on imperialism at this conference which was attended by a large contingent of radical extremists. In their final report of the conference, the AUDC wrote "that only by the abolition of the Capitalist system can justice be secured and the fundamental causes of international friction be permanently removed". Shortly after this meeting, news of Childe's participation was brought to the attention of Dr. Harper, the principal of St. Andrews College. Dr. Harper spoke to the warden of the University of Sydney, Mr. Barff, who in turn showed him the letter written by Childe to the Australian High Commissioner, which clearly expressed his views on the war. ¹⁶ The warden left Dr. Harper with the strong impression that the university had no intention of employing a radical such as Childe. Dr. Harper had the unenviable and embarrassing task of confronting Childe about his political views. Childe wrote about this incident in a "Personal Statement".

"Early in 1918 I found out that the letter to the High Commissioner had been sent to the University, and that the secret junta of extreme conservatives... presuming to speak in the name of the University were engaged in an underground campaign against me, making the most violent statements against me... it was reported to the principal and some members of the council of St. Andrew's that I had taken part in the Peace Conference at Easter... The Principal (Dr. Harper) made inquiries from the University and the Warden showed him the letter and gave him the impression that the University were determined to give me no employment. Dr. Harper said my action in regard to the Peace Conference was liable to prejudice the College in the eyes of its best financial supporters and that he now found my presence here embarrassed him in dealing with the University, he therefore suggested I resign. After a week I had a further interview at which I pointed out that no rea-

sonable, just or legal grounds had been shown for my dismissal, that he himself expressed the highest satisfaction with my conduct... I therefore refused to resign. After further inquiries, however, I saw the secret calumnies of the university jingoes might well damage the College and so offered my resignation on this ground..." (Personal Statement 1917: Bodleian Library Archive)

Childe's resignation addressed to Dr. Harper was forcefully written. His outrage was clearly evident. The political persecution aimed at him deeply disturbed his moral beliefs in the sanctity of scholarship. He was unyielding in maintaining his innocence and blamed unidentified university officials for his ouster. He also perceived his firing in broader terms in that he thought it was indicative of the grossest form of political tyranny.

"Since I accepted the appointment as Resident Tutor which the Council offered me on your recommendation, I have discovered that the University authorities have taken up an attitude of very pronounced antagonism towards me on account of my political views. In view of this fact I have begun to fear lest my position here prejudice the College in its dealings with the University. As I am unwilling to do anything to hurt the college in any way, I am prepared to offer my resignation to take effect June 1st. or such later date as you may determine, if in the opinion of the Council and yourself my retention of this post for the full term of my appointment might be damaging to the College. This must not be taken to imply an admission of the principle that the private political philosophical views of a public teacher are any just disqualification or that penalisation for such views is anything but the gravest menace to the whole intellectual life of society..." (Childe to Harper May 2, 1918: Bodleian Library Archive)

It appears Childe was wrong when he wrote to Murray in 1917 that there were "vestiges of freedom" in his native land. For during his ill-fated return he was hounded by those in power. His

resignation was accepted by St.Andrews' officials, who, unwilling to pay the remaining months of his contract, honored it only after numerous acerbic exchanges. After Childe's dismissal the issue of his forced resignation was raised in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly.¹⁷ The Minister of Public Instruction was asked whether it was not contrary to the law that religious and political tests were applied in the selection of teachers at the University and whether Childe had been forced to resign from St. Andrew's because of his views on war and peace. The Minister replied that no such tests had been given to Childe and that his name had not been before the University for employment. Strictly speaking this statement was correct, for already employed people on the University payroll (Childe was hired in 1917) were "reviewed", not "tested" by their peers.

Childe's forced resignation from St.Andrew's foreshadowed the persistent political persecution he continued to experience at the hands of the University of Sydney. In May 1918, he expressed a keen interest in another post at Sydney, a tutorial in ancient history. The local Workers' Educational Association (WEA) formed a class on political philosophy for Childe and asked the director of tutorial classes at Sydney, G.V. Portus, to attend so Childe could prove his competence as a teacher. In July Childe made a formal application for the position of tutor. Unfortunately, the efforts of the WEA on Childe's behalf did not help, as Portus' "recommendation" consisted of one sentence, which stated that Childe was a "satisfactory tutor". Despite

Portus' curt report, at the meeting of the Joint Committee for Tutorial Classes Childe was recommended for the position by a vote of six to one. Shortly after this committee meeting, the dissenting member, Professor Todd, wrote to the chancellor of the university describing the meeting in detail. The argument against Childe had solely concerned his "suitability" on the basis of his political opinions. Todd made no secret of his own views:

"As a member of the University I object strongly to this proposal to place in an office of trust in the University a man whose opinions are contrary to the national interest; the more strongly, as he may if appointed have opportunities of infecting the students in his classes..." (Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

Professor Todd's pleas against Childe fell on sympathetic ears. Childe was denied the post. His colleagues and friends were distressed at this second blatant act of political prejudice. Among them H.V. Evatt (at the time Associate Chief Justice) and Bill McKell (New South Wales Labour Minister) did what they could to help. McKell and Evatt confronted the Minister of Public Education, who said the issue of Childe's politics had already been raised and would not be subject to any further discussion. McKell, Evatt, and a Mr. T.J. Smith wrote to the Minister of Education "for the record" that:

"Mr. Childe's academic record is a distinguished one, yet the Senate of the University, which is supposed to be composed of cultured men who should be tolerant and broad minded let their personal and political beliefs affect their judgment. Simply because Mr. Childe holds certain political opinions which are not recognized as orthodox the university refused to sanction his appointment. We very much regret it, because it means we

will lose a man we can ill afford to spare. We have not too many men of distinction, particularly in the science of archaeology. We have analyzed the position disinterestedly and it makes our blood boil to think that such an outrage should be perpetrated on a citizen of this State by the Senate of the University..." (Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

Their efforts were of no avail; in fact their letter became part of the Department of Defense Censorship Reports. Thus by the middle of 1918, after having graduated from the University of Sydney and Queen's College, Oxford with distinction, Childe had been fired from one job and was now denied another because of his political views. To make matters worse, during 1918, Military Intelligence began to intensify their surveillance of Childe and other pacifists. Childe's mail was routinely opened and censored, and it seems likely that Military Intelligence was in regular contact with the University of Sydney lest Childe try to obtain another position. Powerless to change his plight, he certainly did not help his own cause when, in a gesture of defiance, he wrote to the Chancellor of Sydney:

"As the University of Sydney has set its face against all freedom of the teacher and ignoring academic merits, inquires into the private views on politics of its professors and teachers, you will be relieved to hear that the enclosed section of my will whereby the University stood to gain about \$2500 has been canceled in favor of a more enlightened body..." (Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

Childe made his bequest to the Labour Council of New South Wales, asking that they use the money for "educational propaganda". In September 1918 he went to Queensland, where friends in the Labour government promised to help him find employment. The

only record of Childe's activities in Queensland and later in Brisbane come from "field officer reports" of Military Intelligence, which highlight his activities in the anti-conscriptionist movement, Labour politics, and the Peace Alliance. The description of Childe and those he associated with seems rather humorous today. Childe's compatriots were referred to as "University men gone wrong", and Childe was portrayed as a good man but "bereft of sound judgment" or "wanton in judgment and utterance":

"The baseness of this abuse of patriotic citizens and loyal University men is incredible in a man who prides himself, more than on anything else perhaps, upon being an intellectual. It is firstly a statement 'prejudicial to recruiting', and, secondly, marked by an arrogance and untruth, which in the interests of the country might well be curtailed..." (Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

This same officer seemed to think Childe's sister was more intelligent and that Childe himself was not too bright. For in analyzing a letter Childe's sister wrote to him in which she maintained that Childe's political beliefs made life awkward for everyone, wrote:

"It is a pity writer [Childe's sister] cannot impart to him some of her finer feelings. It is pretty obvious that if he received a position under the Queensland Government his services would be required mainly as a publicist..." (Department of Defense, Military Intelligence Censorship Reports)

Childe's next paid position, albeit short lived, was as a teacher at Maryborough Boys' Grammar School in Queensland. His public espousal of the anti-conscriptionist position did not endear him to the Headmaster of this conservative school, who was openly antagonistic (Childe to Evatt, November 1918). Unfortu-

nately, Childe was also not a good lecturer, and his young students often victimized him. One student recalled, "Whatever scholarship Childe brought with him was obliterated in the pandemonium that attended his classes. The climax came one day when a class all armed with peashooters launched a concerted attack on him" (Institute Archive). Childe's tenure at Maryborough was cut short by demonstrations by the pupils following press attacks on Childe inspired by Military Intelligence.

At the beginning of 1919 Childe obtained a job in the State public service office before obtaining a temporary post later in the year in the Tutorial Classes Department of the University of Queensland. He held this job for a year, however, he was not offered a permanent position once again on political grounds. Although no hard archival evidence can be found which definitively proves political prejudice was brought to bear in this instance, the fact remains a man of far less academic merit was appointed. A report in the Daily Standard, the local labour party newspaper, expressed no doubts about the circumstances of Childe's failure to obtain the post:

"There is good reason for believing that, when the vacancy occurred in the Department of Classics, instead of attempting to get Mr. Childe's services, arrangements were surreptitiously made to get someone else, politically less objectionable, and when the senate met the matter had already been settled. Every effort was made to keep Mr. Childe in the dark...(Daily Standard)

Childe found himself without any sort of income and increasingly desperate. He wrote to Gilbert Murray about his treatment at the hands of University officials and requested a recommenda-

tion on his behalf (Childe to Murray May 24, 1918). Childe described the universities in Australia as being:

"controlled by a clique of bigoted & narrow minded men who, despite their high intellectual attainments, have always opposed with the utmost bitterness any form of radicalization, who have been the bitterest enemies of the Labour Party in the past, the first to advocate conscription during the present war, constantly hostile to the W.E.A. & the tutorial movement. The result is that the University has become instead a place where free interchange of ideas is impossible, a glorified technical college for turning out B.A.s, M.B.s & engineers impressing them on the way as far as is possible with the regulation conservative and anti-liberal ideas..." (Childe to Murray June 8, 1918: Bodleian Library Archive)

Childe was understandably frustrated and angered by the political persecution he suffered at the hands of university officials, for he was denied three times what he felt must have been his rightful position in academic life. Yet he also recognized there were some who wanted to help him but could not, for he wrote to Murray that there were some liberals on staff "but they cannot safely, as married men, openly take up arms in the defense of freedom of a public teacher so bitter is the terrorism of the junta of jingoes" (Childe to Murray May 24, 1918).

Childe's comments to Murray illustrate he was beginning to realize, or, perhaps more accurately, come to terms with the fact that his chances of obtaining an academic position in Australia within the field he was trained were virtually nil. In subsequent letters to Murray, he described the circumstances of his dismissal at Sydney and for a time even considered immigrating to the United States (Childe to Murray, July 1, 1918). With an academic career seemingly an impossibility Childe began to turn toward a

more active role in labor politics. Indeed, Childe wrote to Murray that he had "since June been de facto barred from any sort of occupation save political agitation" (Childe to Murray October 25, 1918). After such intense political persecution, Childe felt that the liberal professions, particularly academia, needed to be rescued from the unscrupulous bigotry of men such as those who conspired with Military Intelligence to keep him from being gainfully employed. Childe believed the intelligentsia had a vital role to play in the transition to socialism, a conclusion that was based on his experiences with the class struggle in Australia. As I will demonstrate in the next section, Childe came to believe the intelligentsia was a defense against revolution, an essential mediating force between the contending classes, and a guarantee that socialism would come as a rational consequence of interpreting the thought of each class to the other.

Childe and Australian Labour Politics

Forced out of academia, Childe gravitated to a career in politics. Indeed, radicals seemed to be the only people willing to hire Childe. Between 1919 and 1922, Childe was an active participant in the Labour Party and the Left-wing political scene. He published his only nonarchaeological text, How Labour Governs (1923), and wrote a number of articles and miscellany, which appeared in a host of Australian political journals and news-

papers.¹⁸ In virtually all of Childe's publications, he was an outspoken critic who did not favor one group over another. Childe's overwhelming concern was not with the vagaries of party politics, but rather the transition of Australian society to socialism.

Childe refused to believe that intellectuals could not be active as intellectuals within the labour party (it was common among Edwardian socialists to have compassion for the working class but also disdain for their political apathy and inertia). According to Childe, intellectuals played a crucial role in the transition to socialism, and because of this, he was especially bitter toward those intellectuals at Sydney who catered to conservative and repressive elements of political parties. In short, Childe believed the capitalists were too greedy, the labor leadership too self-seeking, and the workers too gullible to sustain a movement to socialism. In a letter to Murray, Childe noted that there were:

"no middle class socialist societies to interpret the proletarian movement to the governing classes on the one hand & on the other hand to give sane councils to revolutionaries & I.W.W. So there is no U.D.C. or league of Nations Society of any weight to come between the extreme pacifists & internationalists & the dominant jingoes... The result is an ever growing bitterness between the two sections of the community..." (Childe to Murray June 8, 1918: Bodleian Library Archive)

The only group Childe seemed to have any sympathy for was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Founded in 1905, the IWW was a union based on the principles of Marxist class conflict and the American philosophy of industrial unionism. The IWW

sought to create "one big union", undivided by sex, race, or skills, through which workers would own the means of production and distribution. The transformation of society would stem from a process of nonpolitical revolution and on the job actions that would wage effective war on the great combinations of capital. Undoubtedly, what impressed Childe about the IWW was that, unlike other political groups, they possessed a long term organizational structure of a "scientific" character aimed at transforming the social order from capitalism to socialism. However, Childe condemned many of the IWW militant activists who engaged in violent acts.

According to Zinn (1980), the arrival of the IWW in Australia had a profound affect on the Labour Party and radical politicians. In this regard, Childe was no exception. The Labour party's response to the IWW, known as One Big Union (OBU) in New South Wales, was to condemn this movement. It is in the controversy between the OBU and the Labour party that one finds the roots of Childe's analysis presented in How Labour Governs: A Study of Workers Representation in Australia (1923). It is interesting to note here that How Labour Governs was not published in Australia but in London by the Labour Publishing Company, an offshoot of the Labour Research Department. Childe was unable to find a publisher in Australia because the book contained severe criticisms of the structure and personalities of the Labour movement in Australia. Undoubtedly labour leaders felt it would do nothing to help the movement and those criticized probably did

not want the book published to begin with.¹⁹

Childe's book was a landmark in the history of Australian labor politics and established Childe as a gifted historian of political theory (Cambell 1945; Gollan 1964; Smith 1964; Zinn 1980).²⁰ Childe described in detail the history and development of the trade union movement in Australia and the emergence of a working class party which had won power in a parliamentary system. Based on first hand observations of in fighting and power struggles during a hectic period of the Australian labour movement, Childe concluded that the parliamentary system was a creation of upper classes. Thus the parliamentary system embodied upper class traditions and privileges, and that once within its orbit the working class representatives would out of necessity lose their alliance to their own party. Once in the system, representatives of the workers would "rat on" their principles and fail to implement the programs on which they had been elected.

Childe's interpretation of the labor movement was both skeptical and angry in that he forcefully rejected the vulgar and reactionary quality of much of Australian social and political life. This could have been due to the influence of H.V. Evatt who believed that socialism could be attained in Australia but only if the working class remained loyal to their constituency (Evatt 1940). Childe went out of his way to criticize labour leaders who became engrossed with the trappings of wealth and position once in power. In addition, Childe accepted without question the

belief that the current sociopolitical organization of Australian society involved the exploitation and enslavement of the workers and that the object of a labour movement must be to alter the social structure. Thus Childe concluded his book by writing:

"As the Labour Party, starting with a band of inspired socialists, degenerated into a vast machine for capturing political power, but did not know how to use that power except for the profit of individuals; so the O.B.U. will, in all likelihood, become just a gigantic apparatus for the glorification of a few bosses. Such is the history of all Labour organizations in Australia, and that is not because they are Australian, but because they are Labour..." (Childe 1923:277)

While Irving (1988) has shown that Australian labour historians have incorrectly interpreted this final paragraph of How Labour Governs as indicative of Childe's disillusionment with working class politics, he has not recognized the original contribution within the work itself. When viewed in light of Childe's other works, such as the article about Australian politics he published in Labour Monthly, it possible to see Childe was arguing that the working class had been disillusioned by the repeated failures of Labor governments to live up to their socialist promises.²¹ It was amongst the trade unions that Childe believed a new and potentially productive working class politics could emerge. In addition, he believed that the working class, in conjunction with intellectuals, could construct a movement with two inter-dependent parts, specifically industrial and political wings. According to Childe, socialism would be the result of a coordinated strategy of labor government activities to defend the working class and public control and of trade union struggles for

industrial democracy. Childe was all alone in maintaining that the Labour Party and the trade unions could make socialism a distinct possibility in Australia. In the end, his ideas were not accepted or even well received by either group.

Before I discuss the final article Childe was to write about Australian labor politics, it is necessary to detail the events which led to its publication. Between 1920 and the end of 1921 Childe remained John Storey's personal secretary. In December 1921, however, Storey redefined Childe's role. Storey selected Childe to be a Research Officer in the Premier's Department, where he was supposed to provide the labor government with ideas for legislation and administrative reform. He was also supposed to meet other labor leaders and portray Australian Labour politics in a positive light. According to Irving (1988), this was an important position and it reflected his high standing with the government. The job also took Childe back to England where he was well paid for the first time in his life (\$525 a year).

Like his previous jobs, Childe's tenure as a Research Officer was short lived. In 1922 the Labour government lost the national elections and Childe was fired by the incoming conservative New South Wales Coalition Government. In fact, Childe's firing was one of the first official actions taken by the new government (Childe was dismissed on the grounds his job was an unnecessary duplication). According to Irving (1988), Childe's quick dismissal was indicative of the importance of his position, for the new government deemed Childe to be too high profile. Childe's

friends were outraged that he was again fired for political reasons. The former Labour minister, Bill McKell, who had already protested Childe's dismissal from St. Andrew's College, wrote about the circumstances of his firing:

"This man is a brilliant scholar. His qualifications are unassailable. He was appointed to the London position after being found suitable for it by the public Service Board. No one inside or outside the Public Service can point to anything but honourable and straightforward on the part of this man. His dismissal is a disgrace to the incoming administration..." (McKell 1970:)

Apparently, even Childe's father, with whom he had virtually no contact, was concerned about this latest form of political persecution (Green 1981a:62).²² His father wrote to George Fuller, the new Conservative Party Premier, about the circumstances of his son's firing (he was not worried about his son but rather his daughter whom he characterized as being an invalid).

"Will you please do me the kindness of telling me what are the terms of my son Gordon's dismissal... Of course I am not surprised at your cabinet's action; for all my sympathies are with you and your party; but Gordon has always been a good son and a generous helper of his invalid sister, making her a handsome monthly allowance from his salary... With hearty congratulations on your return to office, and with every good wish for a successful tenure..." (Rev. S.H. Childe to George Fuller, quoted in Green 1981a:40)

Childe's personal reaction to being fired varied according to whom he was writing. For example, he wrote to Murray that he "had the opportunity to return to the work for which I am really fitted & hopefully can escape the fatal lure of politics"(Childe to Murray August 1922). In a letter to David Blelloch (a friend from the Oxford University Socialist Society) Childe explained

his position in the following manner:

"The ultra reactionary Government which succeeded the Dooley Labor Ministry in NSW will not want my advice on State Insurance Banks or Family wage schemes such as I've been dishing up for the Laborites--nor will they want a prominent Laborite as myself--in fact they have already indicated this by cable with indecent haste. So it behooves me to look for a job as I don't particularly want to go back to Australia--which is rather a bloody place per se and at the moment is particularly hopeless..." (Childe to Blelloch circa 1922: Institute of Archaeology Archive)

The final article Childe published was done so anonymously.²³ The article, "When Labour Ruled--in Australia, by an Ex-Ruler", appeared shortly after the New South Wales Labour government was defeated. Childe denied the Labour government lost the election because of the electorate's fear of the new socialist objective that the party had adopted nationally in 1921 to satisfy the militant trade unionists as the Conservative Party maintained. In contrast, Childe believed the Labour Party was defeated because the government had failed to keep their "boundless promises" (Childe 1922:32). The process that led to worker dissatisfaction with the Labour party and labor politics graphically illustrated for Childe a pattern in class-party relations. More specifically, Childe believed when the workers were disappointed in the failure of the government to keep their promises they became apathetic and thus lost their solidarity. The concomitant result was that they would be defeated at the polls because they ceased to be labor. Childe was not simply saying that government support is lost when they fail to meet the electorate's needs, but rather he believed a series of such withdrawals had now affected the polit-

ical consciousness of the working class. This pattern was supposed to be the subject of his sequel to How Labour Governs which he never wrote.

Conclusion

In 1957, at the age of sixty five, Childe returned to Australia for the first time in thirty-five years. He was bitterly disappointed by the lack of progress socialism had made. Childe believed that Australian society in 1957 was dominated by the values of the typical British working class and was far from a socialist society. Indeed, Childe thought Australia was less a welfare state than Britain. Yet he noted by and large the Australian workers earned adequate wages and could afford the aspects of leisure they desired such as cars, good clothes, a cottage, and travel. It was these material aspects of life that indicated the power of the working class

The greatest disappointment for Childe upon his homecoming was not the lack of socialism, but the failure of Australian society to develop an indigenous intelligentsia. Upon being awarded an honorary degree by the University of Sydney, Childe noted that a country such as Greenland with one fiftieth of Australia's population had earned a Nobel prize for literature which Australia lacked. Coming back from Europe, where he had successfully fused intellectual and political activity, Childe must have felt his prospects for the future were bleak as he

described Australia in a letter to John Morris as "an intellectual desert". It was perhaps this disappointment, and not that of socialism as Green and others have noted, that led to his eventual suicide. Given this, perhaps, in addition to his being black-listed from university employment, as I have already demonstrated, the absence of a vibrant intellectual community led him to remain in Europe for the whole of his working life.

Notes

1. Socialists interpret How Labour Governs as a rejection of laborism in favor of syndicalism, while historians maintain Childe sought to create a new international model of labour based on the I.W.W. Irving (1988) shows the change and continuity in Childe's thought between 1918 and 1923. Irving argues Childe advocated a positive role for the Labour Party in socialist politics. Moreover, Irving maintains Childe understood that the party played an active role in the formation of class, a role that could either bring forward or set back the prospects for socialism.

2. Most of the material acquired by the Australian Communist Party was acquired from the American Socialist Labor Party founded by Daniel DeLeon. Accordingly, trade unionism figures rather prominently in the literature. The other major source of Marxist classics came from Charles Kerr who translated and published a host of Marxist classics from the turn of the century until the mid 1940s.

3. Prior to Childe's attendance at Oxford, he graduated from the University of Sydney with first class honors in Latin, Greek, and Philosophy; he also won the University Medal, Professor Francis Anderson's prize for philosophy, and the Sir Daniel Cooper graduate scholarship. It was undoubtedly from Anderson (a well-known Scottish Hegelian) that Childe acquired an early interest in philosophy, particularly the work of Marx and Engels.

4. The Oxford University Fabian Society was formed by undergradu-

ates. It was organized by the Labour Research Department and was particularly influential at Oxford.

5. Some member of the No-Conscription fellowship were arrested simply for being members of the group Alan Kaye, William Mellor, R.B. Stott, and P.T. Davies

6. Queen's College, Oxford Dean's Files.

7. The Oxford University Socialist Society along with the No-Conscription Fellowship was on the forefront of struggle opposing the war.

8. Because socialists maintained the war was not entirely the fault of the German people, this enraged the vast majority of the public who were inundated with anti-German propaganda (Hamilton 1990). A quotation from a popular history of the war will clearly illustrate the hatred in which they were regarded:

"the field was left open for pro-German agitators of the pseudo-Socialistic or the falsely pacifist school continually to suggest, with an increasing virulence of expression, that the movement towards compulsory military service in our country was the consummation of a great plot to reduce the working classes to impotence after the war and make it impossible for them ever to come out on strike, no matter how just were their grievances. The pro-German agitators also went on to develop the still wilder and more fantastic theme that military conscription was only a step to industrial conscription, and that when the war ended the employing class would have the working class reduced to a condition worse than that of ancient serfs..."

9. Childe's letter to Dutt is written in pseudo article form as his letter has correct references and lacks a true personal touch.

10. For a detailed discussion of the Military Service Act and its

passage see Adams and Poirier(1987), Boulton (1967), Rae(1970). It is also worth noting here that until the 1970s the plight of World War I conscientious objectors was not well known. While Kellogg (1919) and Graham, J. (1923) wrote full length monographs about their treatment, historians have not addressed the issue (see Chambers 1972:5-18) for a discussion of studies concerning the anti-conscriptionist movement.

11. The tribunals varied a great deal depending on the local. Most consisted of elderly "worthies"--the butchers, bakers and local shopkeepers of the local community who were active in local politics. By and large these were conservative people selected for their patriotism and they were largely ignorant of religious and political idealism with a class bred contempt and hostility for socialism. Between 1916 and 1919 almost a million men applied for exemption, but only 6% of those identified themselves as conscientious objectors. Unlike those physically unfit for duty, conscientious objectors had the most to lose. They were only the men subject to arrest and imprisonment in military facilities. According to Graham, J. (1923), the tribunals were dominated by the military and those opposed to conscription were invariably found guilty.

12. Dutt's case is particularly interesting because of his unusual background and the important place he had in the founding of the British Communist Party. He was the son of a wealthy Indian doctor and his mother was a Swedish writer (technically Dutt was related to the Prime Minister of Sweden Olaf Palme). Dutt's

father was deeply committed to socialist and nationalists politics and from an early age Dutt was surrounded by political radicals. By the time Dutt was 21 years old he had served three terms of imprisonment. On the grounds of race--he was classified AngloIndian-- his refusal to be drafted under the Military Service Act was initially dismissed as not subject to normal conscription rules but he appealed this verdict only to be sentenced to six months "detention". By the time the war ended in 1919 Dutt served time in Wormwood Scrubs, Winchester and Aldershot Military prisons.

13. Murray was a native Australian and professor of Dutt and Childe at Oxford.

14. Being under surveillance was not unique for political agitators such as Childe; in fact, it highlights the reactionary nature of the Australian political establishment and the degree to which society was polarized by the issue of conscription.

15. This letter had been given to the warden by the Department of Defense--Military Intelligence.

17. It is not clear how Childe's case came to be brought before the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. However, Childe was friends with both H.V. Evatt and Bill McKell who were active and prominent figures in Australian politics. Childe's case appears in the New South Wales Parliamentary Debates, 1918, 2nd Series, V.71, p.394 and V.72, p.1208 and p.1453. By the time Childe's case was brought up the second time the Senate of the University of Sydney had rejected Childe's appointment and the ensuing

exchange with the minister of Public Instruction was turned to questions of government control in institutions funded by the state. Thereafter Childe's name never appeared again in any official publication.

18. Between 1919 and 1921 Childe lectured widely on Labour politics and was dependent on party patronage. To a degree this is evidenced by his writings, which are critical of the party yet invariable end up with a pro Labour outlook. All attempts to locate Labour party records regarding Childe's position have not succeeded. Moreover, it is not clear at all how Childe was able to get the job as private secretary to the Labour premier, John Storey. This was a choice position and the competition for the job must have been intense. Unfortunately, Storey left no archive and Childe did not mention to those that knew him how he came to this position.

19. How Labour Governs has a very interesting publishing history. Printed by the Labour Publishing Department, this group was to become a front for the British Communist Party. In 1924 this press went out of business. It is not clear how copies of How Labour Governs were printed but remainder copies of Childe's book ended up not in Australia or England but in the United States. In fact a very limited number of Childe's books ever made it to Australia (Smith 1964). Irving believes that the Labour party actively tried to suppress Childe's book, yet archival sources cannot substantiate this claim(personal communication).

20. Despite this, Childe's book received mixed reviews. The

editor of Plebs wrote:

"The book contains an unusual number of technical faults... It is really volume I of a work in two volumes but this is not stated in the book; instead, a purely superficial attempt is made to make it look like a complete work. The title is not the correct one for this first volume. The author's own attitude is inconsistent in various places in the book, and always obscure..."(Editor 1923:936)

21. This article "When Labour Ruled--in Australia, by an Ex-Ruler" was most likely commissioned by Dutt who had just started the journal two years previously. Childe submitted a number of articles to Labour Monthly over the years. His correspondence with Dutt makes it quite clear that he respected Dutt's role as editor.

22. Green (1981a) and Piggott (1958a&b) have written about Childe's relationship with his father and the impact this had on his psyche. His father's letter seems to highlight how bad their relationship must have been. A strict disciplinarian and devoutly religious man, Childe's father must have found precious little with which he could talk to his son about without creating a controversy.

23. In 1924, Childe did publish one more short article in Labour Monthly about the ruling Conservative party in Australia. He made no comments about the Labour party.

Chapter 3
Archaeological Beginnings

Introduction

At the end of the Great War [Childe] returned to Australia and for three years, until 1921, he was private secretary to the premier of New South Wales. These years of political life, at the formative age of the late twenties, were not wasted. They widened the young Australian's horizons, and gave him a broad view of the geographical and supranational facts of life, the influence of which can be traced throughout his later work..." (Bibby 1956:293)

In this brief comment by the British archaeologist Geoffrey Bibby he suggests some of the reasons why Childe came to study European archaeology. The study of ancient societies gave Childe the scope to employ his intellectual powers to the fullest extent, and most importantly, in revealing the past he thought he was uncovering the basic forces and activities that shaped humanity. Given the political persecution he encountered in Australian politics, the appeal of prehistory also lay in the fact that the past was distant and the story of man was, to a degree, impersonal. Accordingly, Childe could maintain scholarly detachment and escape political persecution. Nevertheless, he was constantly plagued by doubts about the value of archaeological studies and consequently about the utility of the subject and himself to society. Without question, this concern was compounded by the fragmentary nature of the archaeological record in 1925 and the concomitant difficulties of formulating historical laws from it.

Throughout Childe's career, he continually tried to illustrate the importance of the study of prehistory to contemporary society. To this end, and with an unusual degree of success, he fused his personal intellectual beliefs with his political activ-

ities. I will, therefore, demonstrate that from the inception of his career, Childe was aware of the political ramifications of his work. For example, I will prove he chose not to publish his Oxford thesis because he was concerned about how German nationalists could use this work in support of their increasingly racist interpretation of the past.

It will become clear that his experiences traveling throughout Europe in the early 1920s had a considerable affect on him. Not only did he study most of the major museum collections and meet the foremost authorities, but he absorbed the pervasive atmosphere and political ferment. This instilled in Childe a strong sense of mission for his work, as he believed the question of Europe's origins was critical to contemporary nationalist movements. In addition, as an Australian, that is as an individual without an inherent European sociopolitical bias, he was able to see Europe as a geographical whole disregarding contemporary political boundaries. Thus when he began to work on his archaeological syntheses, he did so with a viewpoint that Europe was a massive geographical mosaic whose prehistory had not yet been adequately detailed.

Childe's Start in Archaeology

Between 1922 and 1925 Childe swung back and forth between a career in archaeology or expatriate radical politics. His publications during these years reflect this dual interest and he kept

his personal contacts with professionals in both fields.¹ In fact, one could argue Childe was in the vanguard of both socialist politics and European archaeology. In the political field, Childe used his expertise in labor politics to earn a living. For example, after his dismissal by the incoming Conservative party in Australia, Childe was recommended by his friend Robert Chorley to serve as part-time secretary to John Hope-Simpson, who in the 1922 November election was elected Liberal MP for Tauton. Owing to his fiscal problems as well as his undoubted ability, Childe became part-time secretary to two other liberal MP's. In addition to his secretarial duties, his book, How Labour Governs, had just appeared and, according to Dutt, he lectured about his experiences in Australian politics (unfortunately none of these lectures have survived).

In August 1922, Childe spent several weeks at a school organized by the Labour Research Department (LRD), originally founded in 1912 as the Fabian Research Department. At that time LRD members included a host of Left-wing intellectuals, among them Page Arnot, Margaret and G.D.H. Cole, Maurice Dobb, R. Palme Dutt, Raymond Postgate, and Charles Trevelyan to mention but a few prominent members (see Callaghan 1990a; Pugh 1984; Hugo 1980). In 1920 the LRD merged with the industrial unionists of the British Socialist Party and the Socialist Labour Party thus taking an important step toward the founding of the Great Britain Communist Party (GBCP)². By 1924 the LRD was under Communist control and dominated by Dutt, the founding figure of the CPGB.

According to Dutt, the summer schools held by the LRD such as the one Childe attended were of crucial importance to the founding of the CPGB. Unfortunately no archival records of these "summer schools" exist; however, Childe's attendance alone is indicative of his keen interest in socialist politics.

On the archaeological front, in the fall of 1922 Childe made the first of his several trips to Europe, and to Vienna in particular. During these trips abroad, he often stayed with Dr. Mahr, a pro-German Nationalist, who was the keeper of all the materials housed in the Prehistoric Department of the National Museum.³ Childe published the results of his findings in the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute and Man (Childe 1923, 1924). He also wrote obituaries for two East European scholars, Professor Hoernes and Dr. Palliardi, whose work was virtually unknown to British scholars (Childe 1924).⁴ Through his contacts with European scholars, Childe gained access to a host of materials that were unavailable to other scholars and he drew upon this material throughout the 1920s as he was establishing a chronology of European prehistory. He also undertook some part-time lecturing duties at the London School of Economics.⁵

Aside from his travels, Childe began to publish a number of important archaeological papers, most of which concerned descriptions of the contents of archaeological collections privately held (Childe 1922a 1923a&b, 1924). According to his teachers, such as his former tutor, J.L. Myres, Childe was considered to be a "prehistorian with a lot of promise"; while Gilbert Murray

concluded he "was a curious fellow but a bright archaeologist".⁶ Despite Childe's obvious intellectual prowess, he was turned down for number of positions. This was all the more distressing because there were precious few job openings in archaeology, a field which had not yet established itself on the academic scene. At the time Childe was searching for a job there was only one chair of archaeology in all of Britain (the Disney Chair in Cambridge). By and large, archaeology was either a private pursuit of the wealthy with a disposable income or a local interest of amateur archaeologists. Most excavations were carried out by men with no training, and most archaeological sites remained in the hands of the landed aristocracy. Aside from the British Museum, most museums concerned themselves with works of fine art and did not collect prehistoric artifacts or hire people with a background in archaeology. The collection and classification of archaeological material was not deemed necessary.

Academically, archaeology found itself in a Catch-22 situation. Until it was pursued professionally it could hardly qualify for academic recognition, and until universities brought themselves to teach and engage in research in archaeology it was hard to envision how the field could be professionalized (Clark 1989). Charles Thomas, one of Childe's former students recalled:

"I was a student who was reading archaeology and wanting to go into the field professionally if possible. In those days as you will appreciate there were very few jobs. The number of places you would go to learn about archaeology were equally limited. It so happened that I came to Edinburgh because my father had been to the university before me. Equally as there was a professor of archaeology so I thought I would go and

take his classes as well. No school north of the border and even those south had an archaeologist on the faculty." (Interview with Author)

In this broader academic predicament Childe, who would become the foremost authority on European prehistory, was turned down for a number of jobs. For example, in June 1922 he applied for and was denied the Ancient History Lectureship at Leeds University and the Classical Lectureship at Durham University. After these rejections, in 1923 he applied for an Ancient History Fellowship at Hertford University and sought out various letters of recommendation, hoping to improve his chances at obtaining a post. He remarked to J.L. Myres that he felt he had a good chance at getting the Hertford job but was concerned that "membership in the Church of England was required" and wondered "if that means anything different from what it says" (Childe to Myers Feb.8, 1923). More generally, Childe wrote that he "would consider very favourably a proposal for research work in the Near East or any other sort of job which is paid at all" (Childe to Myers October 9, 1923).

By the beginning of 1924, having been turned down for three positions, Childe was truly worried about whether he would be able to find any sort of job in the field of archaeology. He applied for and was denied yet another position at the beginning of the year, a Fellowship at St.John's College, Cambridge. He wrote to Myres that:

"[I] doubt I have the faintest shadow of hope for an Oxford fellowship, social qualifications are such a dominant consideration and a bloody colonial cannot command the requisite status and influential non-scient-

tific connections. However, I must try my luck. I have been totally unemployed since August and am as a result in very awkward straights..." (Childe to Myers Feb.4, 1924: Bodleian Library Archive)

Childe sought out recommendations on his behalf from Myres, Gilbert Murray, Arthur Evans, Stanley Casson, R.C. Wace, and S. Forsdyke. With high recommendations from leaders in the field, in the fall of 1924 he applied for the Senior scholarship to be awarded in October at New College, Oxford. He did not get the position and remained unemployed for the remainder of the year. Without a job in archaeology or politics, Childe was in desperate financial straights. He lived off some money bequeathed to him by family members in 1924, but spent most of these funds traveling throughout Europe visiting various archaeological museums. He felt it morally wrong to save money he had done nothing to earn and spent it all very quickly. To support himself Childe translated several books between 1922 and 1925 for Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., who would later publish a number of his technical archaeological syntheses.⁷ In addition, for a nominal fee, he delivered a number of lectures at the Society of Antiquaries. He also considered moving away from England even if it meant getting a job in a junior position at the British School in Jerusalem, but this prospect did not come to fruition. By the end of 1924 Childe was desperate for work and told several people he would take the first position available that paid a living wage.⁸

In 1925 Childe finally secured a job, becoming the Librarian to the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI). Childe was well paid, a sharp contrast to his difficult financial position from

the previous year. Myres, who was active in the RAI, lobbied for Childe and was personally responsible for getting him the post.⁹ While he remained with the RAI for only two years, Childe's bibliographical work helped establish one of the leading collections of archaeological publications in England. Utilizing his personal contacts with archaeologists living on the Continent, he began to acquire an outstanding collection of archaeological journals and books. It was during this period Childe that became known personally to most British archaeologists of the time.

Between 1925 and 1927, when he became Abercromby Professor of Archaeology at Edinburgh University, Childe rapidly established himself as one of Europe's foremost prehistorians. In just two years he published The Dawn of European Civilization (1925), and The Aryans (1926). He also wrote more than two dozen shorter articles and book reviews. Based in Edinburgh, Childe was the only academic prehistorian working in Scotland, and he was able to exert a tremendous influence on the establishment of archaeology as a professional discipline in British academe. Indeed, the creation of the Abercromby Chair of Prehistoric Archaeology was itself a landmark in the acceptance of prehistory as a legitimate field of inquiry at the university level. This post provided Childe with a setting that commanded attention and attracted a steady flow of distinguished visitors. Charles Thomas, one of Childe's former students at the Institute of Archaeology wrote :

"In thinking back, I am certain that younger people have overlooked the remarkable personal influence [Childe] exercised--not unlike a man who throws a

handful of gravel into a pond, with some lumps making big ripples, other lumps tiny ones, and a few sinking without a trace. What sticks in my mind from Institute days is not in fact any of the Danubian I-IV stuff, Most Ancient East or any of the now obsolete context. It was the approach, the methodology and the concepts, and I taught first-year classes for ten years at Edinburgh University entirely upon the V.G.C. base. Childe may not have had all that many diploma pupils, but en masse they played a very significant part in turning British archaeology outward from big Wheeler digs, the notions of the country societies that most of us grew up with..."(In Chippendale 1989:9)

As Thomas notes, Childe's impact on archaeology was magnified by the intimacy of the archaeological world in 1925. In fact, all the practicing archaeologists in Britain could have easily fit into one small hotel bedroom.¹⁰ In such a small world it is easy to see how a single man could have an overwhelming impact. This fact helps explain why his first archaeological text, The Dawn of European Civilization (1925), revolutionized the way archaeologists interpreted the material record.

The Dawn of European Civilization

In The Dawn of European Civilization (hereafter referred to as The Dawn) Childe tried to outline the entire history of civilization in Europe. At the time it was written, archaeology was largely restricted to detailed studies and descriptions of prehistoric artifacts. The wide scope Childe adopted in this book was without precedent; in the preface he wrote his "theme" was the "foundation of European Civilization as a peculiar and individual manifestation of the human spirit" (Childe 1925:vi). In

The Dawn, and all its subsequent editions, he tried to shed light on the mode of life of the forerunners of European civilization as it was known. Largely concerned with the technical details of the archaeological record, Childe wanted to draw from archaeology a substitute for history as habitually written, with social advance brought not through governments but rather material inventions. Thus Childe's artifact assemblage enabled him to chart for every region (each region had a chapter) the Europe that he thought owed its early advances to the use it made of culture from the East.

The lasting importance of The Dawn, lies not its detailed description of archaeological remains but rather that Childe provided European scholars with an overall framework for their particularistic researches. He produced a model of prehistory into which ALL archaeological evidence fit. A detailed review of the bibliography of the first edition reveals that Childe utilized 102 different periodicals published in more than twelve different languages. In The Dawn he traced the origins of the new and progressive forces that led to the establishment of modern Western civilization. Modifying two opposing schools of thought, Childe wrote:

"One school maintains that Western Civilization only began in historic times after 1000 B.C. in a little corner of the Mediterranean and that its true prehistory is to be found not in Europe but in the Ancient East. On the other hand, some of my colleagues would discover the origin of all the higher elements in human culture in Europe itself. I can subscribe to neither of these two extreme views; the truth seems to lie between them..." (Childe 1925:xiii)

The representatives of these two schools of thought were the British anatomist G. Elliott Smith and his student, W.J. Perry (both proponents of the Oriental school), and on the other hand, Gustav Kossinna, a German archaeologist and proponent of the Occidental school. Childe tried to modify the arguments of these two opposing schools of thought, which suggested that he believed evolution and diffusion were not mutually exclusive processes in history. Throughout his career, Childe maintained this dichotomy was a false one, holding that "in such a field it would be presumptuous to pretend to have attained a final synthesis" (1925:vi). Kossinna attributed all the progressive elements in the cultures of prehistoric Europe to the Aryans or IndoEuropeans. Smith and Perry, on the other hand, stressed the unique contribution made to world progress by the Egyptians, the Children of the Sun, whose globe trotting activities brought civilization to the whole world.¹¹ Much of Childe's early archaeological work sought to assimilate the best qualities of these two opposing schools of thought, which were without question the two most important factors shaping his early scholarship.

Childe's reconciliation of the Occidental and Oriental schools was not so much a compromise as it was his own theoretical breakthrough. Recognizing the importance of diffusion, yet taking the original quality of European culture into consideration, Childe wrote:

"The Occident was, I would submit, indebted to the Orient for the rudiments of the arts and crafts that initiated man's emancipation from bondage to his environment and for the foundation of those spiritual ties

that co-ordinate human endeavours. But the peoples of the West were not slavish imitators; they adapted the gifts of the East and united the contributions made by Africa and Asia into a new and organic whole capable of developing on its own original lines..."(Childe 1925:xiii)

In The Dawn Childe postulated that two main phases or stages in European prehistory existed after the Paleolithic. In the first stage the development of European culture was determined by diffusion from the Orient; during the second stage, European culture developed along its own independent lines. The Dawn was specifically concerned with the first phase in European prehistory and the main text is primarily Orientalist and diffusionist. If viewed out of historical context, however, it gives the false impression Childe's overall intellectual position was a modified sort of diffusionism. This was not true. The Dawn was broadly concerned with the origins and reasons for the progress of modern Western civilization. Childe's subsequent books, The Most Ancient East (1928) and The Danube in Prehistory (1929), would seek to identify specific channels of diffusion between the Orient and Europe.

Aside from Childe's synthetic formulation of an overall picture of European prehistory, in The Dawn he identified and defined the concept of an archaeological culture, or more specifically, "a recurrent assemblage of archaeological types". His introduction of the concept of culture allowed archaeologists to transcend the limitations of a purely epochal model of the past and enabled the pattern of prehistory to be seen not solely as vertical series of epochs but as having horizontal components as

well. Thus the concept of archaeological cultures introduced a new spatial dynamic into the classification and interpretation of archaeological artifacts. However, there was more to the term "culture" than a stage broadly spread through a region or period. These diverse parallel cultures were entities signaled by a group's whole archaeological record; from the material distinctiveness of each entity, one could infer the group that produced it was a social unit. A culture was therefore equivalent to a society or people. Childe's maps of Europe in The Dawn were accordingly geographical mosaics of cultures that he recognized in each of the periods he described. Childe wrote about culture in the following manner:

"Every human community or people adjusts its way of living and thinking to its present environment and its own traditions--ancestral adjustments to often very different environments, as when the English ruling class takes its top hats and frock coats to the semi-tropical country like Queensland. The sum total of these adjustments--houses, clothes, ways of getting food and myths to account for droughts or diseases--constitutes what archaeologists and anthropologists term culture..."(Childe 1929)

Outside archaeology, the European political scene in the mid-1920s was rapidly changing. Adherents of the new concept of archaeological cultures, most notably Kossinna and his followers, were able to identify "people" behind the data. Childe undoubtedly derived the concept of culture from Kossinna, who was the first person to use the term in an archaeological context. But Kossinna used the concept for radically different purposes, most especially to justify his belief in the superiority of the

"Nordic peoples".

Kossinna was an overbearing figure who throughout the 1920s wielded his influence widely by placing his students in choice institutional positions in Germany and surrounding countries (Veil 1984). Although he died in 1931, his students carried on his dogmatic and racist studies. With the rise of fascism in Germany his pupils received massive amounts of money for their research provided, of course, it supported racist theories. In a series of books by Kossinna and his pupils, they looked to archaeology to provide proof that ancient Germanic peoples were the "firstborn" of all European peoples, that is, a faultless and superior race of people. This belief led to the establishment of the S.S. Department of Ancestral Inheritance which was largely responsible for the excesses of Hitler's National Socialism. Members of this group sought to find the original geographical distribution and establish the racial superiority of the ancient Germans thereby giving their descendants, twentieth-century Germans, the right to rule over the whole of Europe (see Arnold 1990 for a discussion of Kossina's influence on the Nazi's Nationalist program of archaeology).

In contrast to Kossinna's racist motivations for using the concept of culture, Childe's definition of culture in The Dawn was more open ended. In spite of this openness, or perhaps because of it, the definition allowed racists to equate people with contemporary cultures and identify specific groups as the progenitors of material and cultural advancement. Such a position

was the furthest thing from Childe's mind, for in a letter to Myres he wrote of The Dawn that the book "aimed at distilling from archaeological remains a preliterate substitute for the conventional politico-military history with cultures, instead of statesmen, as actors, and migrations in place of battles" (Childe to Myres Oct. 12, 1925).

The concept of culture, and more specifically the "Aryan" or "Nordic" myth of racial superiority, was very much at the forefront of political discourse by the beginning of the 1920s. According to Snyder (1939,1962) and Poliakov (1974), the doctrine of the superiority of the Aryan race had a profound effect on all Western thought from 1920 through the end of World War II. It was embraced most fully in Germany and popularized by the works of Arthur de Gobineau and Houston Chamberlain. The Aryan myth was the root source of other, secondary, racist myths, which justified Germanism, Anglo-Saxonism, and Celticism in the eyes of their adherents. For racists were not satisfied simply by proclaiming the superiority of white over colored races or by discriminating against Jews. They felt it necessary to erect biological and psychological hierarchies within the white race itself in an attempt to justify new rights of conquest, domination, and overlordship vested in a still more exclusive caste. This justification would provide the theoretical foundation for the superiority of the Nazis under Hitler. In 1925 Hitler wrote in Mein Kampf:

"It is outstandingly evident from history that when the Aryan has mixed his blood with inferior peoples,

the result of the miscegenation has invariably been the ruin of the civilizing races. All that we admire on this earth--science, art, technical skills and invention--is the creative product of only a small number of nations, and originally, perhaps of one race...If mankind were to be divided into three categories, founders, maintainers, and destroyers of culture, the Aryan stock alone would represent the first category of founders. From them come the fundamentals of all human creative effort..."(Hitler in Comas 1953)

The study of the diffusion and evolution of European civilization had grave consequences, whether it was Kossina, Smith, Perry or even Childe interpretation's of the past. In his review of a collection of essays entitled Culture: The Diffusion Controversy Childe wrote:

"that the problem is not merely an academic one must be obvious to those acquainted with the other writings of the Elliot Smith's school. It is an integral part of their position that war and oppression and other vices of culture are the results of a more or less thick veneer of Egyptian influence on the innate peaceableness and kindness of 'natural man'. To some sentimentalists this account offers encouragement, while others might prefer to trace progress in the gradual amelioration, suppression or transcendence of such vices. Elliot Smith's school stand in fact nearer to Kropotkin and Tolstoy than to Marx or Lenin..."(Childe 1929)

Clearly, Childe was aware of the possible abuses of prehistory on the part of both Orientalists such as Smith and Occidentalists such as Kossinna. One can understand why prehistorians have been unaware of Childe's concerns since his earliest publications in archaeological journals such as Man, Nature, and the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute do not reflect this preoccupation. Given this unawareness, it is interesting to compare Childe's reviews of W.J.Perry's books The Origin of Magic and Religion and The Growth of Civilization, which appeared in Man,

the official publication of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and The Plebs, the organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges. Perry, a Reader in Cultural Anthropology at University College London, was an influential student of Elliot Smith. Like Smith, Perry was a hyperdiffussionist, who believed the Egyptian "Children of the Sun" were responsible for the diffusion of civilization throughout the world. Childe described Perry's books in Man in the following way:

"They cover an enormous field of research and present a wide and comprehensive view of the whole evolution of spiritual and material civilization. A mass of scattered phenomena are knit together into an engagingly simple unity and are related, as they should be in any genuine archaeology and anthropology, to the vital problems of sociology. The result is a system which is not only calculated to appeal to the layman, but must be stimulating and suggestive to the specialist..."(Childe 1925:27)

In contrast Childe wrote of Perry in The Plebs:

"Mr. Perry sets forth... how far back in human history class divisions reach, how from the earliest times religion has been the instrument of ruling classes for the attainment of dynastic ends, and how throughout historic times the common people have been mere pawns in the game of priests and kings... His books purport to relate exactly how ruling classes originated and why men began to fight. His conclusions on these points vitally affect sociological theory..."(Childe 1924:441)

It is obvious from these two reviews that Childe was writing for two completely different audiences, each with their own distinct theoretical paradigms. In the former, he was writing a technical and detailed review for other archaeologists; in the latter, he was writing for the knowledgeable layman with an interest in socialism. These two approaches within Childe's writing became blatantly obvious in the 1930s when he began to

publish his so called "popularizations" (e.g. Man Makes Himself, What Happened in History, Progress and Archaeology, and Social Evolution) through publishing houses such as Cobbett Press, Pelican Books, and the Watts Thinkers Library. It is little known, however, that he utilized the same dual approach in the 1920s, a fact that clearly demonstrates from the outset of his career he sought to engage in reasoned debate with a wider world of scholarship than was immediately available in his own subject. He also remained sensitive to the political implications of his written work.

The second review published in Plebs thus exemplifies Childe's unique contribution to archaeology, for he brought to it a Marxist's concern for generalization and a scholarly concern for the facts of prehistory as they pertained to the unique character of European civilization. It is also interesting to note that Childe was deferential to Perry in his review in Man. Perry and Smith were influential figures in anthropology and archaeology until the 1930s and, though Childe was critical of their work, he did not press forward his views. Given the political persecution he faced in Australia, and the difficulty he had finding a job, one wonders if Childe deliberately refrained from giving professional archaeologists an open discussion of Marxists polemics for fear of reprisals. There were clearly not many jobs available in prehistory, and he undoubtedly did not want to do anything that could jeopardize his position such as frankly discussing the pros and cons of Marxist theory. Although

Childe was more critical in the Plebs review, he concluded that despite their shortcomings, "Mr. Perry's books are well worth reading, to the socialist they provide a store house of useful ammunition; but let sentimentalists beware of relying on their conclusions" (Childe 1924:443).

The Political Implications of Prehistory

If Childe was so well aware of the political implications of various interpretations of prehistory, one must logically ask why he published, The Aryans: A Study of Indo-Europeans (1926). He was deeply embarrassed by this book because of the way it was abused by the Nazis. Indeed, he never referred to it again in any publication (Green 1981a&b; Piggott 1958a&b; Hawkes 1958). It is my contention that while Childe's focus in The Dawn was on "the foundation of European Civilization as a peculiar and individual manifestation of the human spirit" he came to this conclusion only after researching and dismissing the extremist ideas of those such as Kossinna who claimed Indo-Europeans were responsible for the founding of European civilization. What no author has realized is that despite their publication dates, the The Aryans was written BEFORE The Dawn. This is not a minor point of interest only to archaeological bibliographers, but rather is critical because it indicates Childe was deeply concerned with the possible abuses of prehistory at the hands of German theoreticians. I will demonstrate that Childe sought to publish The Aryans only

when he was being considered for the potentially influential Abercromby Chair. However, before I discuss my reasons for dating the writing of The Dawn before The Aryans I must discuss the latter in some detail.

In "Retrospect", Childe wrote that he had long been interested in prehistory and philology:

"like Gustav Kossinna I came to prehistory from comparative philology; I began the study of European archaeology in the hope of finding the cradle of the Indo-Europeans and of identifying their primitive culture... This search--naturally fruitless--was the theme of my B.Litt. thesis at Oxford..." (Childe 1958:73)

Unfortunately, Childe's original B.Litt. thesis has not been preserved but there is reason to believe that he based most of The Aryans on his thesis. The subtitle of The Aryans, "A Study of Indo-European Origins", was closely related to his earliest interest in archaeology. In The Aryans, much of his analysis concerned a discussion of the various theories of Indo-European origins suggested by philology reviewed in light of the available archaeological evidence. In focusing on the origins of the Indo-European cultures, he was careful to avoid racial explanations for the Aryans' importance and explicitly rejected the idea that they were superior in material culture or in physical or intellectual capabilities. Yet this rejection is buried in a sea of archaeological descriptions. The most forceful wording in the book is located halfway through chapter five. Even its style distinguishes itself from the rest of the book and I can not help but wonder if it was added as the book was going to press.¹² In

his rejection Childe warned the reader about the misapplication of the Aryan thesis in modern politics:

"The apotheosis of the Nordics has been linked with the policies of imperialism and world domination: the word 'Aryan' has become the watch word of dangerous factions and especially of the more brutal and blatant forms of anti--Semitism. Indeed, the neglect and discredit into which the study of Indo-European philology has fallen in England are largely attributable to a legitimate reaction against the extravagancies of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, and his ilk, and the gravest objection to the word Aryan is its association with pogroms..."(Childe 1926:164)

Throughout The Aryans Childe emphasized that man's social evolution was closely related to his intellectual development, which in turn is influenced by his language. Thus Childe wrote:

"The growth of reasoning in its turn goes hand in hand with the development of language... Words are the very stuff of thought. It follows then that a common language does imply a common mental outlook in its speakers; it not only reflects but also conditions ways of thinking peculiar to the users of the tongue in question. Moreover, intellectual progress may to a large extent be measured by the refinement of language. Hence to inherit an exceptionally delicate linguistic structure gives a people a vantage point on the path of progress..."(Childe 1926:3)

The line of argument carried mechanically throughout The Aryans conveys none of the depth and innovation that is characteristic of The Dawn. According to the History of Civilization editor, C.K. Ogden, The Aryans was supposed to be used as a companion to The Dawn but it is in fact more reminiscent of the effect his earliest teachers had on the development of his thought (Ogden 1926). Thus Childe's focus on language echoes the influence of his Oxford tutor J.L. Myres. For Myres' interest in ethnology was based on a belief in the unity of language, cul-

ture, and race, balanced by a sensitivity to geography. Myres writings were characterized by a reliance on the categories of physical anthropology (i.e. Mediterranean, Alpine, and Nordic races) and a more fundamental polarity between Indo-European and Oriental cultures. The arrival of European cultures, according to Myres, was the decisive turning point in European history, for the Indo-Europeans had organization and rationality, whereas the Orientals had an aptitude for trade but a tendency to religious obscurantism and political tyranny (Myres 1911).

Myres was also interested in the broader applications of anthropology, such as its influence on political science, and its possible benefits to the colonial administration, and his reference to theories of race were mostly in the context of the issues of his day.¹³ At the same time that Myres held to contemporary conventions about race, he was raising questions that tended to disprove them. He recognized how susceptible anthropology was to political influence when, for example, he characterize polygeny, the belief in the multiple origin of man, as "a controversial comedy in which it is difficult to say whether anthropology or politics did more to misguide and deform the other" (Myres 1916:68).

In general terms then, Childe's focus on the "Aryan cradle" or Indo-European origins, reflects a pre-1920 concern to write the prehistory of Europe primarily according to philological categories. Although sequences of archaeological material had been defined on a strictly regional basis, their interpretation

on a continental scale depended on models derived from comparative linguistics, a discipline that had reached maturity before the word "prehistory" was invented. The "great" event of later prehistory was accordingly the arrival of the Indo-Europeans, whose genius lay behind the historical nations of Europe and whose linguistic skills were displayed in the Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit literature. (Parenthetically I should add that in the 1920s Childe was fluent in Latin and Greek and was trying to learn Sanskrit).

Clearly then, The Aryans reflects what was the main aim of prehistoric archaeology when Childe was a student at Oxford, specifically, the identification of the common source of later European cultures. One of Childe's former graduate students from Edinburgh University, R.B.K. Stevenson, recalled:

"Childe started off in the field being interested in language rather than archaeology. He came to archaeology as support for his investigations [for the cradle of Indo-Europeans] although his book on the Aryans did come out later than The Dawn it was in fact the first one he started on. He then found that the theoretical Aryans would have to move up the Danube so he too moved up the Danube itself on his excursions. This is what led him to write the Danube in Prehistory. It was the raw material that he had gathered together in hopes it would support some enlightenment on the Aryan question, and of course it didn't. He in fact realized early on that he was on a wild goose chase. He then switched to not the Aryans but toward what did in fact happen and the outcome of this search was The Dawn. I am sure The Dawn began as a purely linguistic search..."(Interview with Author)

As further evidence of revised dating, archival records indicate that Childe wrote The Aryans before The Dawn. For instance, in several letters to Myres and Daryll Forde he refers to

The Aryans well before he ever mentions The Dawn.¹⁴ In a BBC broadcast aired shortly after Childe's death, Forde recalled that he "met Childe in the early 1920s in London. He'd come there I think a year or so before from Oxford and had written his book on the Aryans and was well along with The Dawn of European Civilization". Here, Forde remembered The Aryans was Childe's first book. Years later, in another commentary about Childe, Forde reiterated his point about The Aryans being written first. Remarking on a paper by Glyn Daniel in the short lived journal, The New Diffusionist, Forde wrote:

"Gordon Childe was working in London, and here again there was an interesting conflict at the time [1920's]. Childe had a very strong animus against the German archaeologist, Kossina, who exerted considerable influence in Germany through his capacity to influence appointments. His doctrine was one of the Southern Baltic origin of European post-paleolithic cultures, linking them therefore to Nordic peoples. Childe, in writing the first volume of The Dawn of History, was very concerned with the need and importance of working out the evidence for cultural parallels and cultural transmissions from the ancient East to South Eastern Europe and Central Europe, and also through the Mediterranean..."(Forde 1973:447)

There seems to be no reason to doubt Forde's opinion, as it coincides with how Childe described his B.Litt. thesis in "Retrospect". One of Childe's former Edinburgh students, Stuart Cruden, also believed that Childe's original interest and work began with the Aryan question:

"Childe came to The Dawn via the Aryans. The Aryans was what he started on, and the Danube was the block of information which stopped him. The Dawn was the popularization or synthesis or an attempt to make that too heavy block of material into something understandable and readable. It was all started as a by product, I'm

sure he told me this himself, that the Aryans was really the beginning of the work [The Dawn], if you take the order the books were published, they are not in the order in which they were written or the intentions of the man." (Interview with Author)

Both The Aryans and The Dawn, to varying degrees, reflect the tensions Childe felt between his fascination with the problem of Indo-European origins and his doubt about it as an explanation of historical differences. Those who have written about Childe's early career maintain he took either a step back to write The Aryans or returned to his original interest in prehistory (Trigger 1980; Green 1981b). Yet, given Childe's political acumen, it seems logical that he was aware of how his ideas could have been abused or bastardized by German theoreticians and racists. Childe was well traveled throughout the 1920's, read German and all other European languages fluently and was politically sensitive to the winds of change. If this were the case, it seems likely that he simply shelved his thesis and never sought its publication.

The Abercromby Chair of Archaeology and the Political Implications of The Aryans

Earlier in this chapter I stated that Childe published The Aryans only when he was being considered for the Abercromby chair of prehistoric archaeology at Edinburgh University. This is a controversial and original claim that must be supported by facts. The creation of this academic chair was an important step in the professionalization of archaeology. The position was widely

advertised but there were precious few archaeologists who could meet the stringent requirements placed upon it by Lord Abercromby. A distinguished Scottish prehistorian in his own right, Lord Abercromby founded the chair named in his honor. Disheartened and angered by the insular quality of Scottish antiquarians and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Abercromby, declared all Scottish antiquarians ineligible for the post in a virtually unknown codicil to his will. Abercromby envisioned the chair in the following way:

"First, I limit the subject for which the proposed Chair is to be founded to that department of the science of archaeology... Second, it shall be a sine qua non that the incumbent of the chair shall be proficient in French and German languages and shall have at least a working knowledge of the Italian language: Third, the incumbent of the chair shall keep himself at all times as far as possible abreast of the whole literature of the subject that is published in Europe; and it is my desire that he shall impart his acquired knowledge not only to his classes, but to a wider audience through the medium of the press and otherwise: Fourth, I desire the incumbent of the chair shall not content himself with the passive role merely disseminating the facts and theories of other writers, but that he shall also apply himself to the investigation and solution of some of the many problems and difficulties that encompass the study of archaeology..."
(Institute of Archaeology Archive)

Despite the fact that all Scottish prehistorians were ineligible for the chair, Childe was neither the first, nor the second choice for the job. After an initial search by Edinburgh University, the post was offered to Miles Burkitt of Cambridge, who turned down the opportunity. Another search commenced and the position was offered to Mortimer Wheeler; he too declined. In comparison to Burkitt and Wheeler, Childe was not yet of the same

academic stature. The major drawback in appointing Childe was his lack of a substantial publication record. At the end of 1925, with only one archaeological book and a handful of articles to his credit Childe was not of the caliber, and certainly not of the social status, Edinburgh University officials expected.

In part, Childe's lack of an established publication record partially accounts for why he sought to publish The Aryans. It is also important to note here that the reviews of The Dawn were mixed, and The Aryans was largely ignored, except in Germany, where it was used to support racist theories of German superiority. Although today The Dawn is widely recognized as being a landmark in the establishment of archaeology as a modern discipline (Daniel 1967, 1981a), when it was published as part of Kegan, Paul, Trench and Trubner & Co.'s History of Civilization series, not a single reviewer recognized the book's importance. The general tone of the reviews is best summed up by A.D. Fraser, who, writing for the American Journal of Archaeology, maintained that Childe's attempt to explain the dawn of civilization in Europe would:

"entail upon him the necessity of being more or less an expert in a score of archaeological fields, and of being familiar with the processes of development of many separate cultures during a period extending from epipalaeolithic times down nearly to the beginnings of recorded history. Such a thing is manifestly impossible; and in view of the rigorous nature of the labor imposed upon him, Mr. Childe may very readily be pardoned for his failure to write a particularly edifying and enlightening book..."(Fraser 1926:196)

According to three of his former students at Edinburgh Uni-

versity (Stuart Cruden, R.B.K. Stevenson, and Basil Skinner), Childe told them he published The Aryans to help his chances at obtaining the Chair. For it was only upon not being able to land the Abercromby position during the initial search that Childe felt compelled to publish what I believe was his thesis. Stevenson, a student at Edinburgh from 1931-1935 recalled:

"Childe's dissertation was The Aryans. There is no question in my mind. Given his background, like myself he was a classicist to start with which required the study of language--language was civilization--and given the times The Aryans was a volume that didn't achieve what it was intended to. But having got it, at a later date realized if he published it could work in his favor politically. It was of course when he was applying for the Abercromby position" (Interview with Author)

The Aryans proved to be particularly embarrassing for Childe, appearing within a year of the publication of Hitler's Mein Kampf.¹⁵ To a certain extent in publishing this book he compromised his political beliefs. This is somewhat understandable given the political persecution he faced in Australia and the numerous rejections he received when applying for archaeological positions. In discussing his interest in the Abercromby chair he wrote to Myres that "he was known as being pro-German and [he] did not want to enlighten conservatives to the contrary" (Childe to Myres December 23, 1925). An examination of Childe's publications in the early 1920s, particularly his analyses of Kossinna's work in the form of book reviews, which appeared in Man and the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, reveal why he could be perceived as being pro German. He thought highly of Kossinna's work, in fact, Childe gave a number of glowing reviews

in which he concluded Kossinna was:

"unmistakably the most commanding figure among German prehistorians and has exercised a more profound influence on archaeological research, at least east of the Rhine, than any individual since Montelius. Owing to the polemic style of his writings and certain nationalistic idiosyncracies in his speculation, his true greatness is perhaps not fully appreciated in this country. Yet it is much to have raised the study of local prehistoric remains to the status of an officially recognized school, both of experts and laymen, devoted to its advancement...."(Childe 1923:55)

As I have already noted, Scottish antiquarians were barred from obtaining the Abercromby chair. Nonetheless, they were openly antagonistic to Childe's claim upon the post. The members of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland were strongly opposed to Childe because he was Australian. From their perspective, an English scholar would have been bad enough but an Australian was perceived as a dual insult. Moreover, Childe was known to publicly embrace the virtues of Marxian theories which was an anathema to the conservative archaeological Edinburgh establishment. News of Childe's appointment as Abercromby Chair generated a furious letter from George Macdonald and John Graham Callander, leading figures in Scottish archaeology, to the president of Edinburgh University. According to Angus Graham, Childe heard news of this exchange and fired off a stern letter to the President of the University demanding in no uncertain terms that he receive full backing of the university (Graham, A. 1980: 263). Childe's reaction did not endear him to Edinburgh University officials although his response is understandable in light of the political persecution he had already experienced. Unfortunately most Scot-

tish prehistorians did not know, or perhaps care, about Childe's earlier experiences. Indeed, because of his actions most people thought Childe was paranoid.

Stuart Piggott, Childe's successor to the Abercromby chair, recalled that Childe's entire approach to archaeology was at odds with the provincial studies adhered to by the tradition bound Scottish:

"Childe came to Scottish archaeology at a time when it was really at its most insulated. It was hardly peeping across the boarder southwards and Childe suddenly produced this very wide European viewpoint and taught this and wrote his books and interpreted the Scottish material in European terms for the first time. Combined with his Left-wing political views, to most Scottish antiquarians he must have seemed at best quite strange, and at worst, like an infidel" (Interview with Author).

Angus Graham, secretary of the Ancient Monuments Commission of Scotland, wrote that the animosity toward Childe was barely concealed. In fact, George Macdonald was bitterly hostile to Childe personally and politically. According to Graham, on more than one occasion Macdonald said that the difference between O.G.S. Crawford and Childe was not political, "for both were communists, but Crawford's not an ass" (Graham, A. 1981). In short, Piggott aptly recalled that Childe "began his life at Edinburgh University under a cloud of dislike and disapproval from the Scottish archaeological establishment". Older members of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland especially resented Childe for holding an academic chair that should have gone to a "true Scot". For many years Childe was snubbed and not even invited to

attend the meetings the society held. In the gloomy setting of Northern Ireland, where he was excavating, Childe wrote in his notebook that he was living "in an atmosphere of hatred and envy disliked by one and all" (Institute of Archaeology Archive, Notebook 47).

Economic Approaches to Prehistory

Despite the landmark status The Dawn has achieved in the history of archaeology, as early as 1930 Childe realized the cultural-historical approach was of limited value. He doubted that the history of particular ethnic or national groups could be traced far back into prehistoric times because differences between them were due to distinct social conditions; therefore, studies that pursued this line of inquiry could not give meaning to the archaeological record (Childe 1930:240-247). Accordingly, he came to regard the cultural-historical approach as a way in which the raw data and minutiae of the archaeological record could be used to form a coherent narrative. Because of the ever increasing knowledge of prehistoric remains, this narrative had to be continually updated and revised; hence The Dawn went through six editions, and the Most Ancient East four.¹⁶ However, since such a picture of European and NearEastern prehistory was now available, Childe sought to escape the limitations inherent in a narrowly technological concept of cultural development by examining broader economic trends. In defining "Prehistory" for

the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences he wrote of the way in which he thought prehistory should be pursued:

"Once chronology is determined, it is possible by studying the relics of a given period and area in relation to the environment and by constant reference to similar objects still made and used by backward peoples to give a fairly clear picture of the material culture and economic organization of the inhabitants... Archaeology thus discloses various stages in man's progress toward civilization, marked by increasing control over his physical environment. This control is effected by improvements in material culture--tools, weapons, dwellings..."(Childe 1933:316)

The results of Childe's new approach culminated in the publication of The Most Ancient East (1928), The Bronze Age (1930), and New Light on the Most Ancient East (1934).¹⁷ In the first of these works, The Most Ancient East, he schematically outlined much of his future work on food production and metallurgy.¹⁸ In focusing on the economic base of society, Childe argued there were several reasons why civilization would diffuse, foremost among them was the Orient's demand for raw materials.¹⁹ The development of the bronze industry, he argued, led not only to cultural stimulation in supplying raw material to new areas but to the migration of craftsmen as well. Thus by turning his attention to the economic and sociological implications of metallurgy Childe was the first person to develop an archaeological history equivalent to economic history. Childe realized that the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages which he took great pains to describe and place into chronological order, had technologies that were associated with very different kinds of societies in Europe and the Near East.

In Childe's next book, The Bronze Age (1930), he introduced two important points referring to the economic and sociological implications of metallurgy. First, assuming that metal working was a full-time occupation, he argued it involved industrial specialization and thus freed certain members of society from active involvement in the quest for food. Second, on the assumption that bronze was the first indispensable article of trade, in contrast to luxury goods, he argued that bronze working meant the loss of Neolithic self-sufficiency (Childe 1930:10-30). This economic interpretation of the archaeological record heralds an important change in his attitude toward European prehistory. Whereas in The Dawn he had stressed the positive aspects of diffusion to the recipient cultures in Europe, he now viewed it very negatively. For example, in The Bronze Age he wrote:

"In our period it is not possible to identify a single vital contribution to material culture originating in Europe outside the Aegean area. And, if it be argued that this poverty in material culture was counterbalanced by an inherent spiritual superiority, we can point to the cannibal feasts of the Knoviz peoples and the human sacrifices depicted on the Kivik tombstone. Certainly bronze age burials suggest a monogamous family and a high status for women. But, after all, few Orientals could actually afford a harem, and the queens of Egypt were buried with sufficient pomp. It would be silly to say that Scandinavian decorative art was superior to Babylonian or Minoan. And no one in their senses will compare the Swedish rock carvings with even poor Egyptian base relief of the trondholm horse with a Summerian bull of 3000 B.C. (Childe 1930:238-239)

Clearly, Childe's interpretation of prehistory had shifted significantly. In his revised edition of the Most Ancient East, retitled New Light on the Most Ancient East (1934), the earlier

"ex oriente lux" diffusionist approach to the European connection is blended with an economic and sociological analysis. According to Childe, "the advance from a stone age savage to a Western European is purely cultural. In studying that advance archaeologically we must look at economic revolutions" (Childe 1932:17). In part then, Childe's utilization of an economic base drew on his reading of contemporary anthropology. For he considered archaeology and anthropology to be very closely related disciplines. This outlook, quite unusual for a British archaeologist, could be the result of the influence of his friend Forde and perhaps accounts for his three visits to the United States between 1936 and 1939 (Peace 1988). Childe explicitly stated the complementary influence Marxism and social anthropology had on his thinking in a letter to the American anthropologist Leslie A. White:

"I took from Marxism the idea of the economy as the integrating force in society but I was just as much influenced by Malinowski's functionalism and tried to stick the archaeological bits together by reference to their possible role in a working organism..."(Childe to White Feb.4, 1943: Bentley Historical Library)

The content of Childe's correspondence with White and Hallam Movius, an American archaeologist at Harvard, reveals he believed the workings of past societies should be investigated along functionalist lines. A functionalist approach was then a dominant paradigm in British social anthropology but still relatively foreign to many British and American archaeologists. In emphasizing the articulation of all aspects of society into an independent, adaptive system Childe believed that:

"Our dumb relics and monuments can never reveal the

names of prehistoric chieftans, the dreams of seers or the issues of individual battles. But they can disclose the economic organization of a people and a period... The study and appreciation of a culture from this angle impose fresh obligations upon the archaeologist. He can no longer be content with merely describing and classifying the objects he uncovers; he must ascertain how they were made and whence the materials for their manufacture came. To do that the archaeologist must enlist the co-operation of geologists, botanists and zoologists, of practical farmers, artisans, and engineers as well as ethnographers..."(Childe 1935:10)

Drawing on functionalism, Childe maintained that archaeological cultures are to be understood "not as a dead group of fossils or curios but as living functioning organisms". Thus for Childe prehistory could not be content with an abstract concept of humanity. This holistic viewpoint was in sharp contrast to the severe limitations other British archaeologists felt to be inherent in archaeological evidence. According to Childe:

"it is an old fashioned sort of history that is made up entirely of kings and battles to the exclusion of scientific discoveries and social conditions. And so it would be an old fashioned prehistory that regarded it as its sole function to trace migrations and to locate the cradles of peoples. History has recently become much less political--less a record of intrigues, battles and revolutions--and more cultural. That is the true meaning of what is mis-called the materialist conception of history--realistic conception would as Cole says better--it puts in the foreground changes in economic organization and scientific discoveries. And clearly there is scope for a realistic conception of prehistory and ample opportunity for the archaeologist to co-operate with the historian on the cultural and economic side..."(Childe 1935:9-10)

Childe's debt to Marxism was becoming clearer, for after 1930 his reliance on Marxist theory grew in a variety of ways. He began to utilize language reminiscent of Morgan and Engels (e.g. Ancient Society and The Origin of the Family Private Property and

the State). Throughout The Bronze Age he periodically used the terms savagery, barbarism, and civilization to designate stages of cultural development. In his own notes, found in the proofs of the Bronze Age, he wrote, "I must use the concept revolution when evidence permits, see Engels on the separation of handicrafts from agriculture as a point in human development" (Institute of Archaeology Archive). In his Presidential Address to the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, a conservative organization which he had just been named to head, Childe went to great lengths to emphasize the importance of Marxist and economic theory to archaeologists.²⁰

Childe maintained the traditional classification of Paleolithic, Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron Ages were indicative of "real revolutions that affected all departments of human life". Childe was accordingly trying to breath some life into the descriptive taxonomies and classificatory focus of other archaeologists. For in the 1930s, the vast majority of archaeologists were mired in the minutiae of the material record and deeply involved in building detailed chronologies. In sharp contrast, by incorporating an economic perspective into the archaeological record Childe was suggesting that:

"the terms paleolithic, neolithic, etc. should be regarded as indicative of economic stages. In adapting as one method of classification by economic stages, archaeology would not be abandoning that historical character which I claimed the concept of culture gave it. We shall continue to distinguish cultures and to assign each its proper place in a framework of absolute chronology. Only then shall we consider the economic stage to which a culture should be assigned on the 'functional-economic' classification. The latter step

constitutes a comparison between the material equipment, economic organization and scientific knowledge of one prehistoric people with those of others..."(Childe 1935:9)

The fundamental use of Marxism in prehistory as Childe saw it was that it presented a certain method or approach to interpreting the archaeological record. The approach was essentially historical and involved the acceptance of the view that human history could, in its broadest movements from age to age, be understood in a causal fashion. Marxism thus involved a philosophy of history. In addition, Marxism enabled scholars to study the past (as well as the present) as a predictive guide for the future. Therefore, the archaeological and historical record contained evidence of the principles and forces at work which could be expected to continue to shape the world of the present. Ideally then, archaeologists could make a real and practical contribution to society. Of course here Childe makes the leap from academic theory and praxis. The fact Childe made such a leap indicates and perhaps confirms in a different way his commitment to action oriented Marxism as a sort of social scientific engineering.

To extend his interpretation of man's past, Childe felt bound to the "mode of production", man's material remains, for that is where he felt major social issues and social structures could be identified through archaeological inference. He felt it was possible to hypothesize about the "mode of production" since the the means and mode production were intricately interwoven. In holding this view, Childe was clearly influenced by his col-

leagues within the scientific community who accepted the dialectical view of history. From this perspective, or as Cole put it, "the realist conception of history", involved the historical process working itself out by the ceaseless confrontation and conflict of movements based upon the impact of changing material forces upon the life of human society and archaeological cultures.²¹ The underlying forces were not ideas, but the ever changing means of production, whose constitution is affected by the growth of human knowledge over the forces of nature. Yet the realist conception of history is not limited to the means of production alone even though it underscores the broad movement of human history. For Childe believed mankind made their own history, yet at the same time he was cognizant that man was and remained a social animal whose mind and character were unintelligible unless they were considered in their social context. Thus men could not make their history alone or individually, but rather through social activity.

The direct evidence or agents of historical change are not the means of production but the movements which men build upon them as well as the relations between the mode of production and the historical process made by the effect which the changes in these powers have in changing the social relations among men. Childe believed the great history makers were those who by invention or experiment, or by enlarging the depth of man's intellectual knowledge, alter the character of the means of production; thereby they also change the ways in which men make their living

and organize themselves economically. Each phase in the development of the means of production involves a corresponding economic system which can be seen in the archaeological record.

Given the limitations inherent in the archaeological record, Childe sought to extend his interpretation of man's past through economic and materialist theory. Childe was acutely aware of the limitations of the archaeological record and concerned with the theoretical grounds on which archaeological inference was based. He realized that the archaeological record is material, either artifactual or environmental, or a combination of both. It is by definition "text-free", thus direct access to the motives and opinions of individuals or groups who were responsible for the evidence is lacking. In short, prehistory was history, but a unique sort, for it was amenable to analyses which propose questions that are answerable in light of the particular nature of the data. Because a plausible chronology of European prehistory was established Childe sought to reconstruct past societies in economic terms. Childe's reconstruction involved trying to reestablish prehistoric thoughts and actions. Archaeology therefore was both scientific and historical because it could systematically study some of the physical manifestations of applied science throughout human history. Thus Childe began to adhere to Marxism via a materialist and economic base as the best framework in which the study of prehistory could be pursued.

Conclusion

Although Childe is now recognized as one of the foremost prehistorians of the twentieth-century, as I have demonstrated, his career commenced with a good deal of hardship. After being politically persecuted in Australia, he had to endure numerous rejections in England before he was able to acquire his job as the librarian to the Royal Anthropological Institute, and subsequently, become the Abercromby chair of archaeology at Edinburgh University. Once employed in Edinburgh, Childe wrote to Dutt that he was finally able to "escape the fatal lure of radical politics" and thereafter devote his energies to the evolution and development of European civilization. This might well have been the case had Fascism not overtaken Germany, threaten most of Europe, and essentially demand a response from academic scientists in whose name Nazi's began to construct National Socialism.

With the publication of five books between 1925 and 1930 Childe burst forward as the leading authority on European prehistory. His background in Australian politics helped him interpret the prehistory of Europe as it had never been done before. Keenly aware of the broader sociopolitical context of not only the importance of the prehistory of Europe but contemporary politics, Childe's vision of the past and present revolutionized the field. While he was always attracted to the problem of Indo-European origins, his synthesis of European prehistory deliberately sought alternative models, more concerned with the material record and related social developments, by which to interpret the patterns

of prehistoric change. Thus in The Dawn and in all his subsequent archaeological scholarship, Childe's interpretation of prehistoric Europe was written in terms of a materialist framework.

Using the particular nature of archaeological data and economic theory Childe sought to reconstruct past societies in economic terms thereby recovering the thought and actions of prehistoric peoples. In his hands archaeology was both a science and history because it systematically studied the physical manifestations of applied behavior through time. Childe's focus on science as it pertained to Marxism, the interpretation of the archaeological record, and socialism in general was influenced by his association with other Leftist scholars in the 1930s. It is to this broader intellectual climate to which I will now turn.

Notes

1. For Childe's work on Australian politics see Childe 1918, 1919, 1922(unsigned), 1924; his work on archaeological matters is represented by 1915, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926).
2. For historical discussions of the founding of the Great Britain Communist Party see Mahon 1976; Branson 1985.
3. Childe befriended many pro-German nationalists as they usually held the key to the doors of most major museums. Within these small museums were the artifacts on which Childe based much of The Dawn on. In addition, prior to 1920 nationalist archaeology was not anything like the serious threat it was to become later in the decade but rather a peculiar and unaccepted theoretical perspective.
4. Professor Hoernes and Dr. Palliardi for whom Childe wrote obituaries in Nature were important figures in Eastern European archaeology. Palliardi was a particularly important person as he spent thirty years researching the prehistory of Moravia. The results of his finding on Europe's ancient were more detailed than any others available. They were also published in his native language, Czechoslovakian which Childe read fluently.
5. The London School of Economics was founded by the Fabian Henry Hutchinson who left \$10,000 to the society for "propaganda and other purposes". Under the direction of Beatrice and Sidney Webb, the LSE flourished. Given Childe's association with Hope-Simpson and the Labour Research Department he was a logical choice for a position as guest lecturer (see Terrins and Whitehead 1984 for an

analysis of Fabianism and the founding of the LSE.

6. Bodleian Library, Western Manuscripts, J.L. Myres' confidential letter to the Provost, Edinburgh University, May 2, 1924; Gilbert Murray personal note written at the bottom of an undated letter from Childe circa 1920.

7. Between 1925 and 1928 Childe translated four books for Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. (See Delaporte 1923; Moret, A, and Davy, G 1926; Homo, L. 1927; Borovka, G. 1928).

8. Childe wrote to Myres that he "would take any job no matter how small that paid a living wage" (Childe to Myres February 21, 1924).

9. J.L. Myres, a trained classicist, played a major role in the politics of English academics. He held official positions in many societies, serving as president of the Royal Anthropological Institute (1928-1931) and General Secretary of the British Association (1919 to 1932). He was the first editor of the RAI's official publication Man. His willingness to be involved in administrative matters and university politics made him a powerful member of the anthropological community which lacked support from university officials (see Boardman 1961 for the details of Myres' academic career).

10. By 1980 the number of people employed in Britain who consider themselves full-time archaeologists was estimated at over one thousand, an increase of onehundred fold.

11. Today the hyperdiffusionist school of Perry and Smith is not taken seriously; however, in the early 1920s they were quite

influential figures in the field and their theoretical perspective demanded serious consideration.

12. Childe often made last minute changes in his texts. Within the Institute of Archaeology's archive are dozens of copies of Childe's books which went through many editions. Even a cursory examination of his work reveals he often dropped in new paragraphs, citations, deletions, and numerous small changes.

13. This was the case when Myres opened a discussion at the British Association on the correlation of mental and physical characteristics aimed at creating a psychological racial taxonomy. His data were based on personal observation, and he concluded that some of these characteristics "are sufficiently widespread over large areas to claim provisional acceptance of racial qualities". These characteristics included, for instance, the "plodding, detail-loving industry of the Alpine strain", while others such as red pigmentation "seemed to result from the disturbance of physiological and psychological make-up by cross-breeding". Myres based his argument on an analogy from animal breeding inferring that the "hypothesis that mental characters are correlated with physical and transmissible in such correlation stands the test of experiment among the higher mammals". He suspended judgment on the ethical superiority of one race over another but testified that in half-breeds of British and Greek "the temperament closely followed the breed" (Myres 1923:116)

14. Childe corresponded with Myres extensively throughout the early 1920s and his letters support this statement.

15. According to Hawkes, Childe never referred The Aryan again in general conversation or in his writing. Normally an affable character, when pushed to discuss this work, Childe responded with uncharacteristic anger. For a publishing history of Mein Kampf see Barnes and Barnes 1980.

16. The Dawn was originally published in 1925; the 2nd edition was issued in 1927 with minor changes; the 3rd edition was revised reset in 1939 and was largely rewritten; the 4th and 5th editions were expanded in 1947 and 1950 respectively; the 6th and final edition, was rewritten and published in 1957. The Most Ancient East was originally published in 1928 (reprinted in 1929); rewritten and published in 1934 under the new title New Light on the Most Ancient East. The following year the 3rd edition was released with a number of corrections; the 4th and final edition was significantly revised in 1952.

17. In The Most Ancient East(1928) Childe surveyed the rise of civilization in Egypt, Mesopotamia and India from the earliest farmers until 3000 B.C. At its most basic level, this work can be seen as a companion volume to The Dawn. Aside from his focus on economic factors, the other significant departure from his earlier work is that he believed in the priority of Oriental invention in the development of European civilization.

18. In focusing his attention on the role agriculture played in the rise of civilization he was well within the mainstream of the work of other British archaeologists. G. Elliott Smith (1923) had expanded upon the importance of agriculture to his hyper diffus-

uionist research. Peake and Fleure (1927) had adopted Pumpelly's oasis hypothesis which proposed that massive desiccation in the Near East at the end of the last Ice Age had caused people to domesticate plants and animals in order to feed the higher densities of populations that had gathered around surviving sources of water.

19. Aside from the demand for raw material, in The Most Ancient East, other reasons for the diffusion of agriculture from the Orient included: agriculture would inevitably lead to soil exhaustion due to the primitive methods of farmers and result in the migration of communities in search of new land: due to internal strife smaller communities would disassociate themselves from the larger group and seek independence; in lean years he felt food gatherers would turn toward being food producers.

20. Childe was elected President of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia which until the mid-1930's was a small group interested in local prehistory. During a bitter split between two factions Child

e was elected President and during his tenure he transformed the group and its official publication, the Proceeding of the Prehistoric Society, into an influential far reaching journal and organization.

21. The Cole Childe referred to was none other than G.D.H. Cole with whom he spent the summer of 1922 at the Labour Research Department school. Cole undoubtedly had a significant impact on Childe's interpretation of prehistory. Cole was less a scholastic

theoretician than a popularizer of Marxist ideas for the educated layman. Cole was also no dogmatist, a fact which must have impressed Childe. In What Marx really Meant Cole's aim was to disentangle what was no longer appropriate in Marx's teachings and argued that "if Marx is to be of any service to us, we must not parrot his phrases or repeat his doctrines by rote" (Cole 1934a:8) Cole argued that the phrase "materialist conception of history" was fundamentally misleading and so misunderstood that a proper definition was virtually impossible. Nonetheless, Cole argued that most people think materialism as "asserting the supremacy of matter over mind, or even of denying the existence of the mind completely" (Cole 1934:14-15). Cole believed that the things Marx called "material" and regarded as the agents of social evolution were products of the human mind. According to Cole:

"Marx called his conception of history 'materialist', because he was determined to mark it off sharply from the metaphysical Idealism of Hegel and his followers. Where he wrote 'materialist' it would be natural in our day to write 'realist', for it is Realism and not Materialism that we are accustomed to contrast with Idealism as a philosophical point of view..."(Cole 1934:16)

Chapter 4
Marxism and Science

Introduction

During the 1930s radical politics flourished in Britain amidst the rapidly changing face of Europe. The Depression caused severe economic deprivations felt by all members of society. Capitalism appeared to be collapsing and less than two years after Childe arrived in Edinburgh nearly three million workers were unemployed. In some industrial areas unemployment reached 60%; poverty, malnutrition, the dole, and massive protests became common place in Britain. Politics became the byword among workers and intellectuals alike.

Given the dismal state of the economy, it is not surprising that Marxism became quite fashionable among artists, writers, workers, and intellectuals. Many intellectuals and politicians pointed to the Russian revolution as evidence that society could be changed. By the end of the decade, the Marxist conception of the function of science and the role of the scientist in society gained wide acceptance. Seemingly over night, various shades of Marxists appeared. Those attracted to Marxism had varied backgrounds; for example, Childe and R. Palme Dutt came from abroad, others from middle and upper class British families. A large percentage attended Cambridge and Oxford Universities (see Chart 1). In her diaries, Beatrice Webb described British intellectuals of this era as "mild mannered desperadoes", that is idealistic men and women who had grown up in respectable families, had respectable careers, yet rejected the status quo and questioned all aspects of society.¹ Childe was captivated by the boundless

energy of these men and women who worked to improve the sociopolitical conditions of the average laborer. Moreover, because the role of the intellectual in promoting change was central to their outlook, Childe felt he had found not only a way to help contemporary society but also to integrate a scientific and archaeological approach to the interpretation of the past. Thus Childe turned to Marxian science as it was popularly discussed and practiced in this era. To examine the impact this larger movement had on his thought I will specifically discuss the relationship between Marxism and science as well the lasting impact of the most important scientific gathering of the decade, the Second International Congress of the History of Science.

Mild Mannered Desperadoes

Throughout the 1930s, those committed to, and those simply interested in Marxism, argued it offered a rational and scientific world view. Marxists believed they were representatives of a new mode of learning, bringing to the workers of capitalist nations the accumulated results of scholarly thought and modern science. Their deepest wish was to educate the masses, democratize scholarship, and fuse the Marxist dialectic with the natural sciences. Charles Wilkins, in "Historical Materialism", wrote forcefully about the scientific merit of Marxism and Socialism.

"Science and worldly development have, in their combined action, superseded the horde of metaphysicians, and relegated them to those homes of lost causes, the

universities, where, in the appropriately medieval atmosphere of Oxford and Cambridge they may elaborate their airy theories for the amusement of one another while the world goes on its way..."(Wilkens 1933)

Though known now for its acerbic polemics, Marxism was defined in the 1930s as a scientific movement, one based upon the historical evolution of the past and the economic conditions of the present. For example, in the most popular selling handbook to Marx's Capital in the 1930's, the author maintained the centrality of the equations which underpin Marx's analysis of commodity forms "had only reached a stable condition when its truths can be expressed in scientific and mathematical terms" (The Students's Marx). The materialist conception of history or, as the pamphlets of the Socialist Labour party put it, "the law of social growth discovered by Marx and Engels in 1848", was central to a scientific understanding of the universe. While the notion of "proletarian science" had been around since the publication of Unterman's Science and Revolution (1909), it was popular principally among those holding a revolutionary perspective.

The belief that Marxism was a science, or a perspective supported by scientific facts, was based upon Engels' Anti-Duhring and Ludwig Feurbach first published in the 1860s.² Of course, the concept of science is also evident in Marx's Capital, with its evolutionary view of economic formation "as a process of natural history" and the claim to have discovered the "natural laws" of capitalist production (Marx 1949). Accordingly, as Marx and Engels themselves had suggested, Marxism was Darwinism in its application to human society (see in particular Engels at Marx'

grave). In fact, throughout the 1920s and 1930s Marxist scholars in Britain, Europe and the United States, increasingly drew upon terms which were borrowed from natural history.³ At the Third International, the scientific paradigm was widely discussed and Engels Dialectics of Nature was republished. Printed first in Russian in 1925, Dialectics of Nature, was translated into English with a long introduction by R. Palme Dutt in Britain in 1934 and in France in 1937.

In Britain, those attracted to the science of Marxism and historical materialism did not deny the Marxian division between "pure" and "applied" science, but rather denied that their interaction reduced one to a shadow of the other. The fundamental purpose of science lay in the understanding of nature, truth was an end in itself. Science could be controlled or planned through a central authority without seriously restricting the freedom of the scientist and paralyzing true scientific activity. In the preface to the first English translation of Engels Dialectics of Nature J.B.S. Haldane wrote about the affect Marxism had on science:

"Marxism has a two-fold bearing on science. In the first place Marxists study science among other human activities. They show how the scientific activities of any society depend on its changing needs, and so in the long run on its productive methods, and therefore the whole society. This analysis is needed for any scientific approach to history, and even non-Marxists are now accepting parts of it. But secondly Marx and Engels were not content to analyse the changes in society. In dialectics they saw the science of the general laws of change, not only in society and in human thought, but in the external world which is mirrored by human thought. That is to say it can be applied to the "pure"

science as well as the social relations of science..."
(Haldane 1940 :vii)

As the 1930s progressed, scientists and non-scientists alike, became more familiar with the application of Marxist ideas and their role in the "science of society". While not all found it acceptable--indeed some were strongly opposed to all forms of Marxian analysis--Leftist British scholars sought to establish the utilitarian role of Marxism. They believed Marxism could help alleviate contemporary problems and they prided themselves on their hard-headed devotion to unsentimental truths. Accordingly, their belief in a scientific understanding of Marxism was elaborated upon in the writings of most authors associated with the Left. According to Strachey (1933), the scientificity of Marxism was thought to be located in the "laws of motion of human society". Rodney Hilton, the distinguished social historian, in recalling the scientific merit of Marxism, wrote:

"Marxism stands in relation to society as the scientific laws of the structure and development of matter stand in relation to science... just as the engineer would be unable to build a bridge without a knowledge of the laws of mechanics, so the working class and its allies would be unable to build a new society without the laws of social development contained in Marxism-Leninism..."(Hilton 1950)

Throughout the decade, clusters of different theoretical concepts from a host of different fields were at one time or another carried under the banner of Marxian science. In holding that Marxism was analogous to the natural sciences, British Marxists claimed Marxism thus extended to the field of politics and economics and could be used to predict and control the transfor-

mation of the world (Haldane 1938). In addition, Marxism differed from democratic politics in that its underlying ideas were based on science not political ideology. In its alliance with science, Marxism was believed to be more rigorous and accurate than democracy in determining accurate methods for social control and experimentation. According to LesGros Clark "science has no politics; it stretches out to pervade and at last control with its mild influence every sphere of human life, politics among the rest. Then science is, if you like, supremely political after all" (LesGros Clark 1938). Given this, the essential hope of Marxists was to penetrate the surface appearance of worldly phenomena to discover an immanent core of necessity and search for iron-clad laws of development. The thrust of Marxism and its tremendous appeal was that it offered a model which was a scientific certainty, not simply another competing ideology.

Those recruited within the British Communist Party, or the numerous satellite operations organized by the party, created a new meaning with respect to the connection between Marxism and science. For example, the Thinker's Library, which I will discuss later in this chapter, was, according to an advertisement in the Rationalist Annual, designed to provide intellectual guidance:

"Modern thought is in a state of flux; traditional systems have decayed; science is extending its conquests and opening up new worlds of ideas, aspirations. As a direct result of this mental unrest, men who in former years would have accepted the prevailing view with little question find themselves in search of sound principle on which to rebuild their conception of the nature of the universe and the duty of man. The books included in the Thinker's Library have been carefully selected to aid them in this quest. They are all books

with an immediate and sympathetic appeal to the average man and woman. In their pages philosophers and men of science appear as interpreters. They deliver their message in clear, simple language, though it is a message that concerns the deepest mysteries of nature..."

In linking Marxism and science intellectuals were able impose precise objectives on what was formerly a revolutionary world view. Thus in sharp contrast to revolutionary politics and the chaos of capitalism, scientific socialism could help guide and improve society in a measurable and controlled manner. This perspective could be described as a modified form of technological humanism, characterized by its practitioners as the "social relations of science" which sought to replace the cruelty and exploitation of the capitalist system by planning and controlling world production. For British Marxists, science itself was the "working with those forces which understand its functions and which march to the same end" (Bernal 1939). Therefore, science was the progressive force of change, providing both the technical means for a new social order and a prototype for the organizational forms through which it could be realized (Bernal 1939). The Russian Revolution of 1917 was perceived as a great step toward, or at least evidence of, a transition to a society with the highest standard of living. In the Social Function of Science J.D. Bernal wrote:

"Even without tilling an extra acre of ground there would be enough food for at least twice the present population in the world, and by using all the good land available there would be enough for something like two hundred times as many; and if that wasn't enough we now know how to make the basis of food out of water and air. In a properly organized world, even without any

new inventions, no one need work more than four hours a day..."(Bernal 1939:409)

Given the state of today's world economy, particularly the collapse of the Eastern European satellites, Bernal's comments in retrospect are outlandishly optimistic. However, those associated with the Left in 1930s believed Marxism was the conscience of science, that is "a unified and coordinated, and above all, conscious control of the whole of social life" (Bernal 1939:410). Accordingly, Marxism presented scientists with the broad theory which gave science its opportunity to enhance man's life. Joseph Needham (1934) wrote that Marxism was the "quintessence of scientific method". For Childe it proved man had progressed, while Bernal believed it enabled its practitioners to "predict and mold human development".

The leading scientists of the "social relations of science" movement were without a doubt the most renowned recruits into the Communist Party (e.g. Haldane, Levy, Hogben, Bernal). They were also brilliant scholars and popular educators, which led to inevitable conflicts with their mentors at Oxford and Cambridge. Despite their elite background, these scientists had drifted away from the classical literary education they received as students. According to Bernal, in the "unscientific past", a general humanistic education was good, and indeed the best possible preparation for statesmanship. In the twentieth century, however, things were different. The professional politician and the scientific expert had to merge and become one in the same so that scientific planning could be coordinated (Bernal 1931).

The turn toward Marxism and science also involved an increasing commitment to historical study. For example, Hogben's popular books Mathematics for the Millions (1936) and Science for the Citizen (1938) were historically oriented studies which traced the development of individual branches of learning from their origins in antiquity. Hogben warned the reader that man's fate must not rest in the hands of "pamphleteers", "clever talkers" or "debaters" (the not so subtle illusion here was to Hitler and Fascists). Similarly, Bernal's Social Function of Science (1939) is also historically oriented and contains many of the themes he would later elaborate upon in Science in History (1954). Needham was also actively interested in historical matters throughout the 1930s. Indeed, although not published until the 1940s, Needham began his work on the monumental Science and Civilization in China in the 1930s (paper shortages prevented its publication until the late 1940s) (personal communication).

A large number of the men I have referred to found an interesting and largely informal outlet for their concern about the role science played in Marxism and contemporary politics. This centered around the dining group organized by Solly Zuckerman known as "Tots and Quots". Its members included Childe, Needham, MacMurray, Young, Levy, Bernal, Haldane, and Hogben to mention but a few well known individuals. At its first meeting not one of the aforementioned men was a Fellow of the Royal Society; in the end all were. Tots and Quots met on a regular basis (monthly) throughout the 1930s at randomly selected restaurants in

London. The discussions held at these dinners were not frivolous, in fact, some declined to participate because they were in fact too serious (Zuckerman 1978). Participation was by invitation only and those included had to receive a unanimous vote of approval by those already in attendance.

Solly Zuckerman, the organizer of Tots and Quots, recalled that the first meeting was held in 1931 and was largely concerned with the economic implications of science. Levy opened the discussion by questioning the extent to which science and economics were prime motivating forces in society. From this dinner, and subsequent meetings, a theme emerged which was to dominate the majority of the meetings held over the next several years--the ethical content of Marxist theory. Zuckerman recalled that after the first two or three meetings he wrote a note to the regular members and asked if they were not being drawn to Marxism because of what was to him an uncritical belief in its scientific basis. Zuckerman recalled that he wrote "Marxism, as expounded particularly by Dickenson, was likely to end in illiberalism and rigid dogma because of a failure to recognize the psychological inequality of people" (Interview with Author). Here Zuckerman's reservations about adhering to political dogma, whether it be Marxist or conservative, is evident, for he did not want to have any part in quasipolitical discourse. According to Zuckerman, the response of members to his query was overwhelming.

"As a group we were 'left of centre', and in time at least two became very Left...and one or two were certainly right wing. All of the members had something to

impart, and all, or nearly all, had one thing in common--they were totally free in spirit and speech, and were seemingly bound to no dogma. Every discussion provoked a clash of opinion, and the greater the measure of disagreement, the more stimulating the meeting. Our talks roamed over wider and wider issues, but more and more what we debated was the question of the general significance of science to society, and the conscious role science might play in social development. Although there was nothing evangelistic about our meetings, especially considering how much we drank, I believe we all thought as a group we were helping blaze a trail towards an understanding of the interchange of science, Marxism and society..."(Interview with author)

From these meetings, the members of Tots and Quots came to the realization that the scientific community could never be fully insulated from social pressures. The only logical course for scientists who believed in the freedom of thought and scientific progress was to align themselves with political forces which were most committed to the advancement of science for the benefit of the entire society. The only country where such an interchange of science, Marxism and politics was being actively pursued was in the Soviet Union. Because of their outlook, radicals like those who regularly attended Tots and Quots were particularly open to Russian ideas. However, there was virtually no interaction between English and Russian scholars, that is until the Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology held in London in 1931.

Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology

In the numerous collected memoirs of scholars who attended,

the crucial event which signaled a move to the Left and the wide spread acceptance of Marxism and science, was the Congress of the History of Science and Technology held in London in 1931. Heine-mann and Branson (1971) have called 1931 a "watershed year" in which ordered society suddenly turned out to be disordered, immoral and dangerous. In Britain, the Labour government fell and Mosley's New Party was formed; Mussolini was already in power and Hitler was close to it. The future of Europe hovered between two extremes--fascism and communism: the middle ground was sinking fast. John Strachey, after resigning from the Labour Party, and then the New Party, subsequently aligned himself with the Communist Party. The title of his influential book, The Coming Struggle for Power (1933) gives an indication of the prevailing mood. In this work, the future of Europe Strachey envisioned offered a choice between communism--for those on the side of the defense of culture, science, and civilization itself--and fascism, which was indicative of "mental and moral suicide thus assuring Western Europe would enter a new Dark Age of barbarism" (Strachey 1933:405). Amidst this situation, Strachey maintained that scholars "were at once the most fundamentally hopeful and most frustrated" (Strachey 1933:45).

Although overshadowed by world-wide crisis, between June 29th and July 4th 1931, British scholars gathered in London for the special session of the Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology. The Congress had a profound and indelible impact upon the scholars in attendance because for

the first time the Russian delegation presentations exposed Western historians to a sustained Marxist treatment of social and economic forces surrounding scientific and technological development.⁴ Only ten days after the Conference ended, Science at the Cross Roads, a book that contained the contributions of the unexpectedly large and influential Soviet delegation appeared in a limited edition.⁵ Labeled a "five day wonder" by the Manchester Guardian, historians agree it is a cardinal document in the history of English and Russian Marxism (Sheehan 1985; Wood 1959a&b; Ree 1984; Wersky 1971b,1978; MacLeod 1972).

According to Needham, the central issue that the Conference touched upon, and one which signaled a new turn in the history of science, was the overwhelming concern of the Soviets with exploring the degree to which intrinsic influences such as class and the larger sociopolitical climate affected scientific research. Those scholars who have written about the Conference maintained the two most influential works presented were Hessen's article, "The Social and Economic Roots of Newton's Principia", and Bukharin's, "Theory and Practice from the Standpoint of Dialectical Materialism" (Science at the Crossroads 1931). In fact, Needham recalled that "we all cut our teeth on Hessen's essay" (Interview with Author).

Hessen attempted to demonstrate that Newton's conception of nature was a theoretical reflection of developments in the social and economic spheres of society. Obviously the chief feature of the Newtonian era was the rise of capitalism which created new

demands for technology, led to the search for new oceanic trade routes as well as deep sociopolitical divisions within English society. After listing a series of technical problems scientists faced, Hessen asserted that the:

"earthly core of the Principia consisted of those technical problems which we have analyzed above (ballistics, hydro-statics, magnetism, optics and mechanics), and which fundamentally determined the themes of physical research of the period..."(Hessen 1931:)

Hessen went on to argue that Newton's analytical methods were directly related to economic factors but were not limited to them alone. For Hessen also believed it was necessary to take into account the superstructure of philosophical theories and religious beliefs. Hessen thus dissects the Principia into idealist, mechanistic and materialist components in order to suggest that Newton's great work was the philosophical equivalent of the social and political compromises of the late seventeenth century. Echoing the language of Marx, the great master, Hessen concluded that science could not advance in a society which restricts technological advancement writing, "science develops out of production, and those social forms which become fetters upon productive forces likewise become fetters upon science" (Hessen 1931:). This was the case with past societies as well as in the present, for in capitalist society science was bent to serve the interests of wealthy industrialists. According to Needham, Hessen concluded his address by drawing a parallel between the English and Russian revolutions when he stated something to the effect that, "in all epochs reconstructing social relationships one is

truly reconstructing science" (Interview with Author).

The essential lesson of Hessen's essay was that it presented science, both past and present, as interwoven with routine life instead of being an aristocratic contemplation of the laws of nature. This struck a nerve with those who attended the conference because they were seeking avenues in which as scientists they could engage in the political upheavals of the Depression era. Scholars interested in Marxian science found themselves without the analytical tools to understand the past and to provide guidance for the future (Abrams 1968; Anderson 1968). There to provide the answers--in central London no less--were Russian scholars. Needham commented that a "sanguine attitude towards the economy of capitalist Britain perhaps was the root of our difficulties. Up till 1931 we accepted the status quo. But when presented with the radically different ideas of the Russians, of course combined with the ravages of the Depression, all that changed" (Interview with author). Obviously the most fully developed working alternative to capitalist society was post-revolutionary Russia. However, prior to 1931 British scholars interest in Soviet events and a scholarship was sporadic at best. In fact, only Haldane had met the Russians on their own territory and though he was largely favorable, he expressed some anxiety. Childe himself did not visit Russia until 1935.

While Hessen's essay was undoubtedly significant, it would not have had the same impact without Bukharin, who placed Hessen's work in broader theoretical perspective. Of those associ-

ated with the Conference, Bukharin was undoubtedly the most famous. He was a trusted associate of Lenin in the early days of the Russian revolution but was expelled by Stalin from the Politburo in 1929 as the leader of the "Right deviationists". He never truly recovered from this political set back, though he did go on to become the director of the Industrial Research Department of the Supreme Economic Council and was instrumental in reforming the Academy of Sciences. He even became president of the former group in 1929 but by 1931 he was isolated from any constructive role in politics. By 1938 he was put on trial in one of Stalin's more famous purges and was executed (Katov 1970).

Bukharin's essay presented, "Theory and Practice from the Standpoint of Dialectical Materialism", was the most sophisticated treatment of Dialectical Materialism yet presented to an English speaking audience. Bukharin devoted a great deal of space to explaining the unity of theory and practice and the primacy of practice. He thereby laid the ground for the point that practice was the source of all science. According to Bukharin, science has existed for the purpose of extending and deepening practice in man's struggle with nature, and, therefore, far from being self-sufficient, it is intimately related to man's social life. Bukharin further argued that science was an important element in the superstructure of society, as its development was believed to be dependent upon the economic structure of society.

Bukharin went on to remark about the dangers inherent not so much in the practice of science but in the "fetishizing" of it

and the "deification of the corresponding categories". Bukharin also took this opportunity to praise the achievements of the Soviet Five Year Plan. Planning, according to Bukharin, was the process by which society freed itself from subjugation to incomprehensible necessities, making the future a matter of scientific will, not fate. Thus "the future lies ahead as a plan, an aim: causal connection is realized through social teleology" (Bukharin 1931:32). This planning applied not only to economics but to knowledge of the natural world, therefore, the principle of planning invades the sphere of science and theory. Science could accordingly be tamed by planning, its mystery would be removed and science, joined with socialism, would propel man's progress forward.

From the Soviet's perspective, the conference, and its culmination in the publication of Science at the Crossroads, represented the collective position of an important group of administrators, philosophers and scientists. According to the historian Gary Werskey (1978), the Russians who attended the conference presented their scholarship as a contribution to a program of socialist reconstruction which relied heavily on the work of natural scientists. More generally, what the Soviets wanted to communicate to Western scholars was that above all else the intellectual vitality, self-awareness, social usefulness, and sheer prosperity of science in a socialist society. Clearly this was one reason why the conference affected natural scientists so strongly. Ironically, many of the Soviet intellectual perspec-

tives presented were to be extended more fully in Britain than in the Soviet Union because many of the Russians who attended the Conference were victims of Stalin's purges.⁶ The timing of the Conference was also crucial as it occurred during a period identified by Joravsky (1961) as the "great break".

In Britain, natural scientists enthusiastically embraced the messages contained in Science at the Crossroads. Indeed, Bernal, Haldane, Hogben, Levy, and Needham, all considered it to be a major turning point in their lives. J.G. Crowther (1931, 1935) commented on the unprecedented enthusiasm for the history of science displayed by the Soviet delegation. This inspired him to undertake a new interpretation of Nineteenth century British science. Hyman Levy (1939) recollected the discomfort of the audience and wrote Hessen's study made virtually all work on the history of science obsolete. Needham criticized his own ground breaking book on embryology and hoped that "future historical research will enable us to do for the great embryologists what has been so well done by Hessen for Isaac Newton" (Needham 1934). Hogben was inspired to begin work his popular historical studies of mathematics and science (Hogben 1936, 1938). Bernal (1931) was struck by the unity, philosophical integrality and social purpose of the Soviet delegation and began his work on The Social Function of Science (1939) as well as his later work Science in History (1954).

This distinguished group of British intellectuals all acknowledged the seminal importance of Hessen's work in particular,

and more generally, of Science at the Cross Roads. For the conference not only marked the starting point of a new evaluation of the history of science but demonstrated the impossibility of utilizing science for social reconstruction within the framework of chaotic capitalism (Bernal 1939; Levy 1939). Thus the idea that science had useful and practical applications to society made an enormous impression on Childe's colleagues who attended the Conference.

It is important to note here, however, that it was not just the appearance of the Russians that galvanized those interested in the relationship between Marxism and science. As the effects of the Depression deepened scientific research was beginning to suffer from financial restrictions. Joseph Needham recalled:

"The slow increase of government funds for academic and industrial research which we all sought in the 1920s and lived off was stopped. Unemployment became a reality for my peers and for well trained people like chemists. People like Childe recognized which side of their bread had no butter. Socialists like those of us who attended the Conference were forcefully drawn into the larger aspects of the political situation. Unlike my first years in the laboratory any degree of detachment from society in our work would not be tolerated. I tried to keep to my own field but politics would keep breaking in. Childe never tried to keep to his own field and I think he was always worried about the implications of his work..." (Interview with Author)

Prior to the Conference and the emergence of fascism, scholars such as Bernal, Crowther, Hogben, and Levy had separated their political views from their professional lives. Needham touched upon the central issue when he recalled:

"What the conference did for myself, Bernal, Levy, Childe and all of those on the Left was to crystallize

out in a remarkable fashion what had been simmering in our minds for some time. It was the consistent standpoint adopted by these [Russian] delegates that heightened our consciousness and affected our subsequent works..." (Interview with Author)

Crowther, recalling the impact the Conference had on him was more explicit in what it was the Russians said that so greatly affected those in attendance:

"The movement, of which Hessen's essay was the most brilliant expression, transformed the history of science from a minor into a major subject. It showed that a knowledge of the history of science was not only of entertaining antiquarian interest but was essential for the solution of contemporary problems due to the unorganized growth of a technical society..."(Crowther 1941)

In addition to the high quality of the Russian delegation's essays, those sympathetic to Marxism were impressed by the Soviet government's recognition of the importance of science. It was not so much that those at the conference were won over by Dialectical Materialism or Communist philosophy in general, but rather were impressed the Soviets were harnessing the power of science in a rational manner designed to improve society. In the Forward to Science at the Crossroads the Russian statement of their aims for science was exactly what British Marxist would struggle to accomplish in the succeeding ten years:

"In Soviet Russia absolutely new prospects are opening before science. The planned economy of socialism, the enormous extent of the constructive activity...demand that science should advance at an exceptional pace. The whole world is divided into two economic systems, two systems of social relationship, two types of culture... In the Socialist section of the world we observe an entirely new phenomenon: a new conjunction of theory and practice, the collective organization of scientific research planned on the scale of an enormous country, the ever-increasing penetration of a single meth-

od--the method of Dialectical Materialism--into all scientific disciplines. Thus the new type of intellectual culture, which dominates the mental activity of millions of workers, is becoming the greatest force of the present day..."

The Timing and Aftermath of the Conference

Before I discuss the aftermath of the conference it is important to note here that Childe left no direct evidence that he attended the conference. Despite this it is certain he must have been aware of the conference as he met with many of its participants on a regular basis. In addition, he reviewed many of the books written by the aforementioned scholars in which they all expressed their debt to the Russian delegation. This fact was noted by Childe in all his reviews. He also expressed regret that he could not discuss the impact and significance of the conference. According to Childe:

"The widespread impression that Science is an offspring of magic and a bye-product of rich gentleman's diversions, is a delusion fostered by capitalistic and sacerdotal prejudice... The Congress of the History of Science and Technology has guided scholars to study the social background of all branches of science and how they correlate to the changing needs of human societies... The Russian delegation has shown that to understand outstanding discoveries the proper historic context must be elaborated upon, a method of analysis which touches every scientific endeavor including archaeology. No intelligent person will fail to see the possibilities of this approach and the many fine examples reviewed in the pages of Plebs..." (Childe 1934:23)

Clearly, Childe felt the conference provided scholars with a new approach to scientific study and analysis rooted in its

historic context. This was to guide scholars work for the rest of the 1930s and the timing of the Russian delegations arrival in London was critical, for it coincided with the unforeseeable economic catastrophe of the Depression which had obvious implications for British socialists. It must be noted, however, that between 1929 and 1932 the Soviets were never so motivated to discuss the implications of "Marxist science" as they were in the spring of 1931 (Sheehan 1985)⁷. According to Sheehan, a delay of one or two years would have resulted in one of two possibilities: the Russians never would have shown up or the delegation would have taken on a radically different appearance.

The period between 1929 and 1932 has been described as the "great break" in the relationship between scientists and the government in the Soviet Union. According to Sheehan, prior to this period, few political constraints were forced upon scientists, whose services as "bourgeois specialists" were recognized since the earliest phases of the revolution. The period of grace for Soviet scientists was swiftly brought to an end with Stalin's consolidation of power in 1929. Thereafter the Academy was "bolshevized" through the election of Communist Party members and politically loyal, industrial scientists and engineers. For the first time, academic researchers were obliged to defend their work in detail against the charge it was either anti-Marxist or irrelevant. The net effect was to intensify conscious discussion of the philosophical bases of science as well as the relationship of research to national life among officials and scientists

alike. It was in this heightened self-consciousness about the future that the decision was made to send the delegation to London. Yet on the negative side, this also represented the beginning of Stalinist purges and rigid party line litmus tests.

Based on published reports in popular newspapers, from the staid London Times to the liberal Manchester Guardian (for whom J.G. Crowther was a correspondent), it is obvious the conference attracted an enormous amount of attention. Wersky has noted this must have come as quite a shock to those who attended the conference; in fact, Wersky has noted that while "scientists sometimes make the headlines; historians of science never do, and for good reason" (Wersky 1978:138).

After Science at the Crossroads appeared in print, a stream of reviews of the conference and the book flowed forth, not all of which were positive. Greenwood, in Nature, the self appointed "Times of the scientific community", described historical materialism espoused by many in the Soviet delegation as a "communist explanation of scientific development in which the integrative work of the masses is exalted at the expense of the glorification of genius" (Greenwood 1931:78). Greenwood went on to maintain that "the attitude of the Soviet delegates can scarcely explain any history, however stimulating their message, and their endeavors to put it into practice in their own educational system" (Greenwood 1931:79). A month later F.S. Martin, a historian, reviewing Science at the Crossroads, agreed that knowledge was in part a social product but questioned whether such an insight

could account for all aspects of the history of science. However, Marvin went on to condemn the Marxist concept of "bourgeois science" writing that "the laws of nature are the same for all of us" (Marvin, 1931:130-131). Although Nature did find the Russians presence at the Conference worth noting, it forcefully rejected their contribution on the grounds that it was part of a foreign philosophy. In contrast, other reviews were vicious, for example the review of Science at the Crossroads in the Times Literary Supplement expressed unmitigated hostility. An Anonymous writer believed Russian presentations:

"were meant a contributions to the history of science, and judged as such they are so thoroughly doctrinaire as at times to be laughable.. A long analysis of Newton's position... is intended to show that 'its physical content arose out of the tasks of the epoch, which were raised for accomplishment by the class entering into power'. The writers have no conception of devotion to science simply for the sake of science. Consequently, science throughout means technology to them..." (Anonymous 1931)

While the Soviet delegation stayed in London for little more than a ten days, the ideas and people they left behind would have a long lasting impact. Indeed, the philosophical opponents of Marxism in England deduced that "the movement against pure science and against freedom in science was first brought to Great Britain by the Soviet delegation to the International Congress of the History of Science and Technology held in London in 1931" (Tansley, A.G. and Baker, J. 1946). In the highest gatherings of British academia there was, from 1931 on, a core of exceedingly able Left-wing scholars who enthusiastically pursued a Marxist approach to history and philosophy of science and who also high-

lighted the multi-faceted social relationship of science to society. The ideological and sociopolitical assumptions of past and present science were ruthlessly laid bare by these men, who were themselves in pursuit of scientific socialism. For them science had become a medium for human achievement, a measure of man's progress and a crucial lever of change. Given the historic context, the study of Marxian science was a reasonable response to the social conditions and an effort to examine society so that it could be improved. At its core, science was both a great progressive force and a reflection of the positive forces in societies which encouraged its development. The Renaissance and the Reformation were, according to Marxists, not only blows against Feudalism, but also struggles for the freedom to do scientific research.

The Role of Marxian Science

Historically oriented young scholars who were attracted to the Left, or who joined the Communist Party, grew up in the shadow of the writer/scientist exemplified by those who attended the Congress. Throughout the decade these scholars would take up the themes raised at the Congress and expand upon them. In fact, Childe's best selling and most widely recognized book, Man Makes Himself (1936), was begun in late 1933 or early 1934 after Bernal asked him to write a prehistoric and early oriental chapter for a projected Marxist History of Science (this project never came to

be published).⁸ The major thrust of Bernal's proposed history of science was an attempt to show the utilitarian rationale--practical needs--which formed the infrastructure of the scientific conceptualization of Marxism. To this end, the popularization of Marxian science was pursued on several fronts.

Foremost among the groups which sought to bring Marxism to the masses was the Rationalist Press Association (RPA). Founded in 1899 by the freethinking son of a Wesleyan minister, C.A. Watts (who was converted to Socialism while at Oxford), the RPA published a series of cheap, and therefore accessible, classics under the imprint of the "Thinker's Library" and the "Library of Science and Culture" (Whyte 1949). The RPA also published an influential monthly magazine (Literary Guide) and yearly volumes of the Rationalist Annual. In most of their publications issued in the 1930s, particularly in their periodicals, brief statements regarding the aims of the RPA were found on the title pages. These statements varied in style but what follows is indicative of the majority of those published:

"The paramount need of the present day is for clear thinking on all problems that affect progress and welfare. Rationalists take science seriously and accept the consequences of its methods in all departments of thought and life. They believe that claims to derive some superior knowledge--either from intuition or sacred writings-- are unacceptable. The fate of man is in his own hands and he must expect no miracles, but so great is the power that science has given him that civilization is at the crossroads. We have to choose between using that knowledge to increase human happiness and well being--which is the Rationalist way--or using it for destruction in the service of fanaticism and bigotry..."

In the 1930s the "Thinker's Library" series sold over three million books, and before they went out of business, they had printed 110 separate volumes (see chart 2). It is important to note here that RPA's support of C.A. Watts Publisher offered an alternative to the Communist Party's official publishing house, Lawrence and Wishart. Although widely considered a front organization for the Party, books published by Watts had a much wider circulation, were significantly cheaper, and did not carry the stigma associated with the Party publishing house. For these reasons, it is significant that Childe's best selling books, Man Makes Himself (1936), Progress and Archaeology (1944), History (1947), and Social Evolution (1951) were published by Watts. Childe was not alone in choosing to have Watts publish his books; for example, Pascal's Social Basis of the German Reformation (1933), Levy's The Universe of Science (1939) and Haldane's Fact and Faith (1939) were published by Watts. In many cases, in deciding to have Watts publish their books authors made significantly less money had they chosen a more established press to print their work.

There are at least two reasons why Childe and other figures on the Left sought to publish their works through Watts. First, had their works been published by a respectable university press they would have received a restricted circulation and been too expensive for the average person to purchase (Childe was offered a large sum of money by Oxford University Press for the rights to Man Makes Himself and turned them down for precisely these rea-

sons). Second, had their books come from the official Communist Party publishing house (Lawrence and Wishart) their work would have been received as official communist propaganda. While not specifically concerned with a publication from the "Thinker's Library", Childe, in a letter to R. Palme Dutt, expressed his feelings about being labeled a Marxist and writing for a wide readership. The issue in question which prompted Childe's response, concerned his proposed appointment as a prehistorian in residence at the Marx House (now the Marx Memorial Library) and the possible publication of an annotated edition of Engels The Origin of the Family Private Property and the State.

"I regret to say I have come to the following conclusion. I cannot see what really useful purpose would be effected by a prehistorian, resident in Edinburgh, joining the Faculty of Marx House as a historian. The only practical effect would be to tie around my neck a label and I don't like labels, especially if they are liable to be misleading. This probably is. To me Marxism means effectively a way of approach to and a methodological device for the interpretation of historical and archaeological material and I accept it because and in so far as it works. To the average communist (and presumably it is only for their benefit that this piece of labelling is necessary), Marxism means a set of dogmas--the words of the master from which as among medieval schoolmen, one must deduce truths which the scientist hopes to infer from experiment and observation (archaeologists can do some experimenting and are always amassing fresh observations). I want to be a scientist; why should either group be deceived into thinking I am a schoolman? I want to get good Marxist ideas across to my colleagues and students and in that I have had some success, but they would not listen if I began as a Marxist..." (Childe to Dutt October 14, 1938: Marx Memorial Library, Dutt Collection)

It is important to note here that Childe made a sharp distinction between Marxism as a system of thought and Marxism as

his colleagues misunderstood it as an experiment in Communism in the Soviet Union. As Childe pointed out, the label "Marxist" tends to be misleading as there is no homogeneous doctrine to which every Marxist adheres. Childe's Marxism more often than not differed from contemporary or orthodox Marxism. Christopher Hawkes, a fellow archaeologist, recalled Childe called himself a "deviationist Marxist". According to Hawkes, the term Childe used, "deviationist", was deliberately and carefully chosen to refer to the fact that the Soviet version of Marxism in vogue was deviant, therefore, the "Marxism" in the Soviet Union was not true Marxism. Hawkes recalled that Childe's Marxism was derived from Marx and Engels alone, in fact Childe once told him he read Capital in the original German a number of times (Interview with Author).

Childe's interest in scientific history also took into consideration the concept of progress. The role of the science of progress was both a personal and academic belief. On the one hand, progress gave him hope for the future in the face of economic collapse and the threat of Fascism, and on the other hand, progress was used to reconstruct the manner in which man had accumulated knowledge on the path to civilization. Given this, Childe's concept of progress was scientific in that it was based on the rigorous validation by the observation of real phenomena. Here Childe drew on the historical materialist model of change developed by Marx and Soviet theoreticians. Childe's use of the concept of progress is scientific in that it is embodied in the

principles of dialectics, among which are the constancy of change, the accumulation of inventions, and the antagonism between progressive and conservative elements as a source of energy for change. The principle of dialectics maintains that change is always progressive, therefore, to question whether we have or have not progressed is irrelevant and unscientific, for the answer must be yes. Yet Childe differed from his nineteenth century forerunners in that he emphasized that progress does not always benefit society, nor does it make him more civilized or even further man's development up the evolutionary ladder.¹⁰ As the rise of fascism became more ominous, this fact was self-evident.

In short, the battle waged by Childe and those associated with Marxism throughout the 1930s was for the propagation of science which fell firmly on the side of progress, reason and the spread of free thought. They believed that science had grown at a remarkable rate in the present age and had, and was continuing to have, a profound and, in some countries a disturbing effect on the social conditions of human society. It was not so much that scientific knowledge and the application of the scientific method to the physical world had affected man, but rather the advancement of science had transformed man's mental outlook and evoked new conceptions in history, ethics, philosophy, religion and every other phase of culture.

Man Makes Himself (1940), and Progress and Archaeology (1944) were, accordingly, logical choices for the Thinker's Library

series.⁹ The former, originally published in 1936, also illustrates the evolution of Childe's thought during the period in question. As demonstrated in chapter 3, in all of Childe's writing published after 1931/1932 he redefined his positivistic model of European and Near Eastern prehistory in more technological and economic terms. What Childe began to stress in works such as Man Makes Himself was the realization that both diffusion and technological progress, two concepts he sought to balance, were subjective constructs, albeit derived from the archaeological record. Secondly, it is clear from the margin notes made in his archaeological fieldbooks that he became acutely aware of the limitations of archaeological data.¹¹ Childe wrote "the prehistoric record had always been vestigial and random, the result of a wide variety of natural and cultural actions over time" (Institute of Archaeology Archive).

Given Childe's concern with the limitations of the archaeological record, he began to deny that there was any source of reality outside the historical process, therefore, he felt bound to the material record from which he could make inferences about the structure of prehistoric societies. Secondly, he emphasized the changeable nature of reality and this was an important factor which caused him to adopt the materialist or realist conception of history. However, he deviated from Marxism in that he did not always employ dialectical laws to explain change. In response to an article by Glyn Daniel, in which he was characterized as a Marxist archaeologist, Childe wrote:

"The Marxist view of history and prehistory is admittedly material determinist and materialist. But its determinism does not mean mechanism. The Marxist account is in fact termed 'dialectical materialism'. It is deterministic in as much as it assumes that the historical process is not a mere succession of inexplicable or miraculous happenings, but that all the constituent events are interrelated and form an intelligible pattern. It is the business of historical science to discover the pattern, to find out by observation of what has been done or happened, the general principles relating to events. For Marxists regard history as science. Marxist history is materialistic in that it takes material, biological fact as the first clue to discovering the general pattern underlying an apparent chaos of superficially unrelated events. It starts from the obvious truth men cannot live without eating. So a society cannot exist unless its members can secure food to keep alive..." (Childe 1932)

Childe's interpretation of Marxism was seen in terms of a technological model for understanding the progress and evolution of European prehistory. For Childe maintained that the way people get their living should be expected in the long run to determine their beliefs and institutions. However, it is equally important to note that Childe was a man who needed some sort of faith or philosophy to believe in, particularly as Europe was thrown into a state of chaos with the threat of World War looming larger and larger. This faith or philosophy for Childe was to be found in his increasing concern for the practicality of prehistory and the fight against fascism.

Conclusion

The historical era I have written about was rocked by the economic chaos of the Depression which caused a shifting nexus of

science, philosophy, and politics (both radical and conservative) as well as the politics within the Marxist tradition. Many of the gifted scholars of this period turned to Marxism because they believed capitalist society was collapsing. In their work, Marx and Engels saw history as unfolding in such a way that science was a cognitive activity carried on within the framework of a whole world view, which was in turn shaped by the nature of the socioeconomic order. The science of the past, grounded in the world views of the past, also grounded by the relations of production of the past, had all been necessary stages in the evolution of human understanding. Thus it was necessary to uncover the superseded ideologies of the past and present so that a new social order could emerge.

From the very beginning, interest in Marxist theories were inextricably interwoven with contemporary social problems. It also gave rise to multifaceted attempts to alleviate the terrible social conditions which society faced. In Childe's case he turned to an economic interpretation of the past from which he could make inferences about the nature of prehistoric societies. This concern became acute with the threat of fascism, for Childe wrote to Dutt that his work "will make neither bombs nor butter". Yet in Marxism he found not only a powerful methodological tool to combat fascism but a reason to go on living.

Notes

1. Two points must be emphasized here; first, not all of the scholars listed in the chart joined the Communist Party, Childe included. Despite this, their commitment to Marxism was no less sincere. In fact, a number of people I interviewed believed scholars such as Childe, Hill, Hilton and Dobb were better placed outside the Party. Second, the majority of scholars who were to become well known for their Marxist oriented analyses had been politically active prior to the 1930s. Their activities could be broken down to two types: involvement in the labor movement or those who had been conscientious objectors during World War I.
2. The literature on the relationship between Marxism and science is immense. The most thorough and comprehensive analysis is provided by Sheehan 1985
3. In the United States the link between Marxism and the natural sciences was enthusiastically endorsed by the Socialist Labor Party and its founder Daniel DeLeon. In fact DeLeon was inspired by Engels' Anti-Duhring and Lewis Henry Morgan's Ancient Society.
4. On the last day of the Conference time was set aside for a special presentation of the Russian papers. In the ensuing five days a literal army of translators and typists worked at the Soviet Embassy on the proposed volume Science at the Crossroads. Although not bound till later, the volume was circulated days later replete with typographical errors and transposed lines.
5. The Russian delegation was not working within the mainstream of their academic structure. According to Werskey (1978) and Ree

(1983) the Russian perspective presented at the Conference was to have a limited impact in their native land as most scholars were to die at the hands of Stalin.

6. For the reasons why the Russian delegation never pursued the work they outlined while in London see Needham 1971. In his forward to the second edition of Science at the Crossroads he traces the fall of each member of the Soviet group.

7. According to Sheehan, the Russian's arrival and the high status of its delegates was quite a surprise and caused quite a stir.

8. The Bernal papers are located in the Marx Memorial Library. It must be noted that the men I have been discussing all went on to become leaders in their respective fields but in 1931 were far from being established (See Werskey 1978). Most advanced was Childe who was Abercromby professor of Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh and Needham who gained recognition for his ground breaking studies on embryology (Needham 1931). In addition throughout the 1930s all the scholars mentioned who were particularly interested in the history of science worked from a weak institutional base. Apart from the absence of journals which might have sustained this tradition, none of the key figures--Childe, Bernal, Crowther, Farrington, Hill, Hobsbawm, Hogben and Needham--was himself in a position to train a new generation of professional historians of science.

9. What most fail to realize is that Man Makes Himself was originally part of another series of books quite similar to "Thinker's

Library". In fact, the RPA also financed this series--The Library of Science and Culture. Edited by Hyman Levy, one of the earliest scientists to enter the Communist Party and founder of the Association of Scientific Workers, the intention of this series was to examine the effect scientific processes had on social conditions. In its most general sense, the Library of Science and Culture was designed to do the following:

"present to the general reader a picture of the world, both of action and thought, as science is shaping it. It will reveal how mankind has sought in science the means of satisfying its varied needs; and how, in turn, science is stimulating fresh aspirations, inspiring loftier deeds of progress, and awakening hopes of increasing mastery over the destiny of the race..."

In addition to Man Makes Himself, the volumes printed in the Library of Science and Culture included Scientific Research and Social Needs by Julian Huxley, The Web of Thought and Action by H. Levy, Problems of Destiny by William Paterson and Psychology and Religion by David Forsyth.

10. For a discussion of the concept of progress as utilized by Victorian scholars see Bowler (1984,1986, 1989).

11. Childe recorded these thoughts while in the Orkneys where he excavated throughout the 1930s.

CHART 1**Mild Mannered Desperadoes***Prominent Liberal Families

Haldane
 Lehmann
 Maclean
 Montagu
 Spender
 Strachey
 Toynbee

Journalists

Caudwell
 Lehman
 Spender
 Strachey

Medicine

Auden
 Guest
 Needham

Business

Calder-Marshall
 C. Haldane

Academics

Cornford
 Haldane
 Toynbee

Military

Burgess
 Isherwood
 Madge

Clergy

Day Lewis
 Langdon-Davies
 MacNeice
 Warner

EducationBirth

Before 1900

Oxford

Childe, Haldane
 Langdon-Davies, Pritt,
 Rickword

Cambridge

1900-1910

Auden, Calder-Marshall,
 Cockburn, Fox, Day,
 Lewis, MacNeice, Slater,
 Spender, Strachey, Warner.

Brown, Giles, Hutt,
 Lehmann, Montagu,
 Morton, Pascal,
 Philipps, Sloan,
 Thompson, Upward.

Scientists

Bernal, Blackett,
 Needham, Pirie,

Powell, E.A. Wooster,
Wooster, Waddington.

1910-1920

Blaike, Goodman, Hill,
Healey, Hilton, Tate,
Platts-Mills, Toynbee.

Burgess, Cornford,
Cornforth, Guest,
Heinemann, Hobsbawm,
Kettle, Kiernan,
Klugmann, Knox,
Maclaurin, Madge,
Maclean, Pateman.

Scientists

Birch, Burhop,
Lilley, May,
Shoenberg, Synge.

* Largely based on Wood 1939:75-90

CHART 2

Thinker's LibraryTitleAuthorAnthropology

Anthropology
 Head-hunters: Black, White and Brown
 The Origin of Civilization
 Oath, Curse Blessing
 Men of the Dawn
 Jocasta's Crime
 Kingship
 Man Makes Himself
 Progress and Archaeology

E.B. Tylor
 A.C. Haddon
 G. Elliot Smith
 Ernest Crawley
 Dorothy Davison
 Lord Raglan
 A.M. Hocart
 V.G. Childe
 V.G. Childe

History

A short history of the World
 History of Civilization in England
 Historical Trials
 The Martyrdom of Man
 A History of Taxes on Knowledge
 Penalties Upon Opinion
 A Short History of Women

H.G. Wells
 H.T. Buckle
 Sir J. Macdonell
 Winwood Reade
 Collett Dobson
 H.B. Bonner
 J. Langdon-Davies

Psychology

The Mind in the Making
 Psychology for Everyman (and Woman)
 The Myth of the Mind

J.H. Robinson
 A.E. Mander
 Frank Kenyon

General Science

The Descent of Man
 Savage Survivals
 Fireside Science
 The Expression of the Emotion in Man
 and Animals
 Your Body: How it is Built and How
 it Works
 Man and His Universe
 Dictionary of Scientific Terms
 The Universe of Science

Charles Darwin
 J.H. Moore
 E.R. Lankester
 Charles Darwin
 D.Stark Murray
 J. Langdon-Davies
 C.M. Beadnell
 Hyman Levy

The Origin of the Kiss, and Other
Scientific Diversions
Life's Unfolding
An Easy Outline of Astronomy
Man Studies Life
The Chemistry of Life
Medicine and Mankind
Geology in the Life of Man

C.M. Beadnell
Charles Sherrington
M. Davidson
G.N. Ridley
J.S. Bacon
A. Sorsby
Duncan Leitch

General Philosophy

First and Last Things
The Riddle of the Universe
On Liberty
History of Modern Philosophy
The Evidence for the Supernatural
Clearer Thinking: Logic for Everyman
First Principles
Liberty To-Day
The Man Versus the State
Let the People Think
World Revolution and the Future
of the West
The Conquest of Time
Flight From Conflict

H.G. Wells
Ernst Haeckel
J.S. Mill
A.W. Benn
Ivor Tuckett
A.E. Mander
Herbert Spencer
C.E. Joad
Herbert Spencer
Bertrand Russell
W. Friedman

H.G. Wells
Lawrence Collier

Religion

Gibbon on Christianity
Lecture and Essays
The Evolution of the Idea of God
An Agnostic's Apology
The Pathetic Falacy: A Study of
Christianity
A Short History of Christianity
Adonis: A Study in the History
of Oriental Religion
Our New religion
The Existence of God
Fact and Faith
The Religion of the Open Mind
The Social Record of Christianity
Five Stages of Greek Religion
The Life of Jesus
Selected Works of Voltaire
The Age of Reason
The Twilight of the Gods
Religion Without Revelation
The Bible and Its Background
The Gospel of Rationalism

T.H. Huxley
Grant Allen
Leslie Stephen
Llewelyn Powys
J.M. Robertson

J.M. Robertson
J.G. Frazer

H.A.L. Fisher
Joseph McCabe
J.B.S. Haldane
A. Gowans Whyte
Joseph McCabe
Gilbert Murray
Ernest Renan
Joseph McCabe
Thomas Pain
Richard Garnett
Julian Huxley
Archibald Robertson
C.T. Gorham

The God of the Bible
 In Search of the Real Bible
 the Outlines of Mythology
 Magic and Religion
 The Church and Social Progress
 The Great Mystics
 the Religion of Ancient Mexico
 A Century Against Christianity
 Jesus: Myth or History

evans Bell
 A.D. Howell Smith
 Lewis Spence
 J.G. Frazer
 Marjorie Bowen
 George Godwin
 Lewis Spence
 Kenneth Urwin
 Archibald Robertson

Fiction

The Revolt of Angels
 The Outcast
 The Fair haven
 Act of God

Anatole France
 Winwood Reade
 Samuel Butler
 F. Tennyson Jesse

Miscellaneous

Education: Intellectual, Moral and
 Physical
 Autobiography of Charles Darwin
 Iphigenia
 The City of dreadful Night, and
 Other Poems
 On Compromise
 The Worlds Earliest Laws
 What Are We to Do With Our Lives?
 What is Man?
 Rights of Man
 This Human Nature
 A Book of Good Faith
 A Candidate for Truth
 Morals, Manners, and Men
 Pages from a Lawyer's Notebooks
 The World as I See It
 The Liberty of Man, and Other Essays

Herbert Spencer

Plays by Euripides
 James Thompson

C. Edwards
 Chilperic Edwards
 H.G. Wells
 Mark Twain
 Thomas Pain
 Charles Duff
 Gerald Bullett
 Gerald Bullett
 Havelock Ellis
 E.S.P. Haynes
 Albert Einstein
 R.G. Ingersol

Chapter 5
The Crimson Tide

Chapter 5
The Crimson Tide

Introduction

"In 1933 it can hardly be alleged that prehistory is a useless study, wholly remote from and irrelevant to practical life. In one great country at least, interpretations of supposed facts of prehistory, imperfectly apprehended by an untrained mind of undoubted genius, have revolutionized the whole structure of society. No one who has read Mein Kampf, or even the extracts therefrom in the Times, can fail to appreciate the profound effect which theories of racial superiority of 'Aryans' have exercised on contemporary Germany. In the name of these theories men are being exiled from public life and shut up in concentration camps, books are being burned and expression of opinions stifled just as, they were during fifteen long centuries of darkness..."(Childe 1933:410)

These were the words Childe used in his first lecture to students who attended his course on methodology in archaeology at Edinburgh University. As fascism gained momentum, Childe believed Europe was facing its gravest crisis since its emergence from the Dark Ages. The new threat was not the dogma of the High Church but rather highly technical forms of modern warfare and the propaganda machine of the Nazi party. In the threatening new Dark Age, he feared superstition would triumph over reason, science would be bent to serve the needs of an increasingly narrow technology designed not for the common good of humanity, but for military domination.

Although the bloodshed of World War II did not start until September 1938, ominous clouds began to gather almost six years earlier. Hitler assumed power in January 1933 and the Nazi party began their assault not with guns but with an attack on reason and learning. As a champion of international scholarly cooperation, Childe was appalled by the persecution, exiling, and even

mass murder of men and women on the basis of their race, religious beliefs and political views. In the name of the Nazi party, freethought was abolished in German universities and all intellectual work was channeled toward destructive aims. Only by contextualizing Childe's work against the backdrop of this political crisis can his writings during the war years be understood. In order to assess the impact this threat had on Childe's thought a number of issues must be examined: first, the politicalization of prehistory in Nazi Germany; second, Childe's response to these threats as exemplified by his actions and writings, and the degree to which Marxism affected his responses; third, the political implications of his work and the degree to which he was subject to political harassment and intimidation on account of them.

The Threat of Fascism

Despite the fact that almost six decades have passed, little has been written about the role of archaeology played in the establishment of "New Germany". However, Childe was all too well aware, prehistory became central to the political legitimization of fascism in the Aryan nation. In fact, when Adolf Hitler seized power January 30, 1933, he quickly sought to transform all aspects of German society and culture (Brady 1937). Under the direction of Heinrich Himmler, founder of the SS, and Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior, the entire structure of German

education was transformed. Between 1933 and 1939 the number of chairs of prehistoric archaeology in Nazi Germany more than tripled. In fact, throughout the 1930s, Britain had only three chairs of prehistoric archaeology, there were more than twenty-five in Germany (Arnold 1990).¹

Kossinna died in 1931 yet the attitudes he cultivated and the students he placed in prestigious museums were perfectly suited for the new political conditions in Germany. For throughout the 1930s, archaeology in Germany was increasingly concerned with the history of "Germani". Archaeologists presented "proof" that Germans were the "firstborn" of all people, faultless and superior, and that their original geographical distribution gave them the right to rule over all of Europe. According to this logic:

"We have found the courage once more to admit to the deeds of our ancestors. Their honour is our honour! The millennia separate us no longer. The eternal stream of pure blood binds us across the ages to those Nordics without faults, those not defiled by inferior races of half human, half animal. They alone are responsible for the foundation of the Aryan nation..." (Reinert 1960:121)

Aryans were credited with the development of the high standard of culture found throughout the civilized world. This was even the case in antiquity, for the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Mediterranean were derivatives of the original Indo Europeans or "Nordic Race". In addition, the contribution to culture of the romance countries in modern times was attributed to descendants of the "Nordic Race". According to the Nazis, the so called "Nordic Race" was endowed with certain bodily charac-

ters which represented the highest evolution of the human form, and through racial inheritance, also possessed superior mental facilities. By virtue of their outstanding mental and physical superiority they became overlords in antiquity and thus deserved to become the ruling class in contemporary society. Finally, whenever the "Nordic strain" was mixed with other "inferior breeds" their racial purity was defiled. The aim of the Nazi State, therefore, was to preserve the racial purity, integrity, and dominance of the "Nordic Race", biologically, socially, and politically (McCann 1988). Not surprisingly, the "purest" Germans formed the leadership of the Nazi party. In fact Himmler believed that:

"If we divide the human race into three categories--founders, maintainers, and destroyers of culture--the Aryan stock alone can be considered as representing the first category..."(Comas 1953:24)

This simple and attractive theory served Nazi archaeologists who sought to flatter the conceit of the uneducated petty bourgeoisie who formed the bulk of the Nazi movement. In a propaganda war, Germanic prehistory was taught in schools and in the army and hundreds of thousands of pamphlets and articles were printed to support the belief in the superiority of the German people. Universities were quickly brought under political control by the Nazis. Not only were "non-Aryan" professors dismissed, but those who remained were put under the authority of men chosen for their political loyalty rather than academic merit. From 1935 on, for example, all theses for the Ph.D. degree had to be submitted to official Nazi censors. Even earlier, in 1933, attendance of

scholars at all international congresses was subject to approval of the Science Congress Center, an agency of the Reichministry of Propaganda (Mau and Krausnick 1959).

The primitive racist doctrine supplied by archaeologists was just what the Nazi leaders wanted, for Himmler wrote "Prehistory is the doctrine of the eminence of the Germans at the dawn of civilization" (Mosse 1966). Archaeology was elevated to the rank of official science and quickly became intertwined with the foundations of Nazi ideology. In fact, it was archaeology that provided the Nazis with their symbol, the "Aryan swastika". Virchow's long established German Anthropological Society disappeared, while Kossina's Society for German Prehistory flourished. Kossina became known as the "Master" and his books were taken as the gospel of the official Nordic-Aryan myth (Mosse 1966). The archaeological literature of the 1930s joined hand in hand with the political offensive against all of Germany's enemies. Indeed, in 1939 archaeologists provided "proof" that Poland was an age old Germanic territory and before the end of the year German troops marched into Poland.

Childe was among the first prehistorians to denounce the abuses of his field at the hands of Nazi propagandists. Childe used his academic lectures to rail against the existence of concentration camps in Nazi Germany (he familiar with many of the liberal German scholars who died in the infamous camps of Buchenwald, Dachau, and Saschsenhausen). The death camps, where so many millions of Jews were to die, were established in early

1933. The Nazis were convinced during their consolidation of power that concentration camps were needed for "public order and security reasons". The camps became legal under Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution dated February 28, 1933--less than one month after Hitler assumed power. In an eyewitness account printed in the Left Review Jay Lovestone described the situation in Germany:

"Every devise of publicity and ballyhoo is now being employed feverishly by the Nazis to din into the heads of German people the notion that the Great War of 1914 is really not yet over. The radio, the press, the church, the army, the police, the universities, the elementary schools, the soothsayers, the weather prophets and the scientists have all been mobilized to sell the idea that only one phase of the World War has been finished--the phase in which the Germans were defeated not by the military prowess of their enemies but by the enemy within, the Marxists, the Communists, the Jews...There are in Germany today no less than 65 concentration camps...In these camps more than 50 thousand 'war prisoners' (class war prisoners) are interned. An equal number is being detained or imprisoned under Schutzhaft (preventive or protective arrest) in police stations... The police have been instructed to shoot at sight, without the customary challenge to persons distributing Marxist literature who attempt to escape arrest...(Lovestone 1933:599-600)

According to Gray (1981:28), approximately 500,000 political opponents of Hitler were put to their death between 1933 and 1935. Among the first killed were socialists, homosexuals and Jews. Childe, who had traveled extensively in Europe, particularly Germany, was familiar with those who opposed Hitler. The German Socialist Party, which was the most vocal opponent of Hitler, saw their party members sent to death but even those tangentially associated with the party were killed as well. This

terror within the ranks of the Left was well known and Childe certainly must have known many men who died, particularly since he met many radical and liberal politicians during his tenure as Research Officer for the Australian Labour party.

The Impact of Fascism in Britain

The effect World War II and the threat of Fascism had on archaeological theory is not as straight forward as one might think. To some extent, archaeological developments in theory and practice were lost among the larger issues of global war; however, archaeology did not grind to a halt. It is also important to recognize that German archaeology and archaeologists such as Kossina and his students were well respected throughout Europe. For example, during the 1930s the majority of the Editorial Notes published by O.G.S. Crawford in Antiquity were devoted to the high standard of educational materials being produced by the German Museum Services. In fact, Arnold (1990) and Evans (1989) have argued that German National Socialist archaeology indirectly influenced the development of British archaeology. The reason for this are twofold: first, German archaeologists were more skilled at excavating sites. For instance, Gerhard Bersu, a refugee from Hitler's purges, did field research at Woodbury which changed the way British archaeologists conducted fieldwork after the war (Evans 1989). Second, British archaeologists were impressed by the German government's sponsorship of archaeologi-

cal fieldwork and called upon the British government to follow suit. Although influenced by German archaeologist's fieldwork techniques, British archaeologists turned a blind eye to the political implications of their work. For example, Grahme Clark, reviewing a German archaeological handbook wrote:

"Pursuing such books as these it is difficult for anyone interested in the archaeology of Britain to restrain a feeling of jealousy, not unmixed with despair. The mass of the material and the precision with which it can be treated implies an expenditure of labour, money and scholarship which archaeology has no hope of commanding in our own country without a great change of heart...The publication of an archaeological hand-book on such a scale and at such a price implies the existence of a public far wider than a handful of scholars and a restricted circle of private enthusiasts: it reflects a situation in which a whole people thrills with a consciousness of its past and in which a knowledge of national archaeology is regarded as much a part of the normal equipment of children as algebra or Latin verbs..."(Clark 1938:351)

Although Grahme Clark recognized there was a danger German archaeology could lapse into racist explanations, he expressed unbridled admiration for its organization, especially its emphasis on prehistory when compared with cultural policies in Italy and the Soviet Union (Clark 1939).² Clark was not alone in his admiration of German archaeologists. In fact, Adolf Mahr, who served as president of the Prehistoric Society, was at best a Nazi sympathizer, certainly an anti-Semite, and possibly even an agent for the German government (Arnold 1990). Even though this Mahr's political views were well known, the Prehistoric Society chose to ignore his highly questionable affiliations.

The founder and long time editor of Antiquity, O.G.S. Crawford, whose political attitudes were generally recognized as

Left-wing or Marxist, also maintained close contacts with German archaeologists. As late as August 1939 Crawford visited Germany and even acknowledged an intellectual and practical debt to the German Air Ministry in his ground breaking work on the application of aerial photography to archaeology (the German Air Ministry was the precursor to the Luftwaffe). In commenting about his trip to Germany and the influence they had on his use of aerial photography Crawford wrote:

"I liked the Nazis as little as Bersu did; but I had long ago considered what attitude to adopt in my dealings with archaeologists abroad...I had decided to make no distinctions between Nazis, Fascists, Communists or Democrats..."(Crawford 1955:248).

Bersu, to whom Crawford referred, was a refugee from Germany who was a well respected archaeologist. Childe and Crawford were instrumental in supporting Bersu and his wife Maria after they escaped from Germany. Childe went to great lengths to help Bersu who was interned on the Isle of Man during the war. However, Childe wanted Bersu to declare publicly his dislike of German National Socialism and instead found Bersu sitting on the fence:

"[I am] definitely unwilling to continue to maintain Bersu in comfort and security so that he may remain on the fence without anything to lose whoever wins the war while I am forced to suffer inequalities..." (Childe to Crawford May 11, 1940: Bodleian Library Archive)

Clearly, Childe felt strongly that Bersu should come out and state that he was an anti-fascist and opposed to Hitler, particularly since his own outspoken views caused problems for him in Edinburgh. To claim that British archaeologists were ignorant of how Nazis were using the past for political ends cannot excuse

the actions of men such as Clark and Mahr. Apart from visits and testimonies of academic refugees, one would have had to have had one's head stuck firmly in the sand to have been unaware of what was going on in Germany.

The Meaning of a Nazi Victory

Childe's socialist convictions increased as his abhorrence for the ideals of Fascism grew. In addition, his philosophical views throughout the 1930s were continually changing as his unshakable dislike of fascism was mixed with qualms about communism. Like many other intellectuals, the central attraction of communism was that it was the only overtly political anti-fascist movement. Therefore, its shortcomings were overlooked. According to everyone who knew Childe in the 1930s, his feelings about Fascism were crystal clear. For example, he wrote to Mary Alice Evatt, about his impressions of a visit to Berlin:

"Externally Hitlerite Germany looked rather cheerful and prosperous. One saw no Jews getting beaten up nor communists in chains. The restaurants and forests were thronged. But what is one to say of a nation which rejects Einstein, Reinhart and Walter! And to justify it with travesties of anthropology and history is worse still! (Childe to Evatt May 1, 1933: Institute of Archaeology Archive)

Childe felt strongly about the prostitution of prehistory for political purposes and always disapproved of the nationalist study of prehistory. Childe preferred the wider more encompassing approach emphasized in his own work holding that:

"Objectively studied Prehistory will rather emphasize how much more precious and vital is the growth of the common tradition that leads up to civilization than the idiosyncrasies and divagations of any separate groups, however brilliant. To attempt to cut oneself or one's community off from this life giving tradition is to commit spiritual suicide. To admit as good only what is Celtic, or Germanic, or Indian, as exclusive nationalism would demand, is unscientific and unhistorical..." (Childe 1933:418)

Childe was unique among his archaeological peers in that he not only was well aware of the abuses of prehistory on the part of Nazi theorists but sought to inform as wide an audience as possible about the threat of Fascism. In this effort, he joined many other anthropologists in Britain and America who believed their research would temper nationalism, increase tolerance, and strike a blow for humanism in the face of German fascism. The efforts of these men is best exemplified by Franz Boas's activities and writings regarding the concept of race. In Britain the best example of the antifascist movement was the participation of various scholars in the Race and Culture Committee founded by the Royal Anthropological Institute (Barkan 1988; Proctor 1988; Stocking 1968).

Aside from Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History, which I will discuss later in this chapter, the best example of Childe's concern about the threat of Fascism can be found within the pages of Plebs. In the summer of 1939 Childe became engaged in a debate with Julius Braunthal about the possible outcome of a Nazi victory. In the 1930s there were a number of Leftists who believed that fighting for democracy in a capitalist country such as Britain was not worthwhile. While most liberal and Marxist

scholars were terrified of the consequences of a Nazi victory, in an article entitled, "What if Hitler Won?", Braunthal postulated that such an outcome to World War would have a three fold affect on society. Braunthal believed a Nazi victory would establish Fascism as a form of society with enormous prestige; second, being the overlord of three continents, a Fascist regime could afford to keep an armed power of millions of men in order to coerce any force dangerous to its status quo; third, because of its great power, Fascism would weld the score of formerly independent economic entities of Europe, Africa, and Asia into a single gigantic economic unit. Braunthal argued that this powerful Fascist economy was:

"superior to the economy of liberal capitalism and that a Fascist economy would multiply the productive power of the millions of subjugated peoples and yield enough to feed them, or even improve gradually their conditions of life"(Braunthal 1939:26).

In response to Braunthal, Childe wrote an article titled, "Productive Power and Fascist Economy", in which he questioned Braunthal's conclusions on historical grounds. Childe wrote that history showed an increase in production was always dependent on the expansion of the market and that this expansion was always dependent on an increase in the purchasing power of the masses.

"History shows few periods when productive forces have in fact been multiplied and the standard of life raised. One began about 300 B.C., when Alexander the Great opened Hither Asia to Greek trade and colonisation, and continued roughly till 50 A.D., when Claudius added Britain to the Roman Empire. A second coincides with the expansion Islam between say 650 and 850 A.D. A third period began with the opening of the Atlantic sea-routes to European commerce or perhaps a couple

centuries earlier. In each case the increase of production accompanied an expansion of the market..."(Childe 1939:54)

In each case Childe cited, economic expansion was arrested by inequalities in the distribution of the social surplus, that is the appropriation of too much by too few. Conflicting ideologies were fused into rigid orthodoxies. Scientific research lost stimuli from expanding industry and freedom of interference by the class state. The socialist complaint against modern European capitalism, according to Childe, was that capitalism had failed to give the masses sufficient purchasing power to enable them to buy their products, hence the ever recurring economic crises characterized by a capitalist economy. In fact, Childe believed the prosperity of the U.S. economy in the post depression years was solely "achieved by stimulating the masses to purchase industrial products like motor cars, air conditioning etc". Childe believed that the limits of world capitalism had been reached and that industry must extend its scope to include the lower classes or risk stagnation. To do so, however, would require "a modification of the social structure" and the failure to make appropriate changes would involve "the frustration of science that is already foreseen by scientists themselves" (Childe 1939:55).

Childe also maintained the multiplication of productive power could only be effected by the application of science. However, science only flourishes in periods of intellectual freedom (this is not to be confused with political freedom).

Accordingly, Childe wrote:

"The Nazi regime is the negation of intellectual freedom. If existing dogmatism be maintained, it must arrest scientific advance which alone can release fresh productive forces. One cannot, of course, predict what would happen. One can only infer that if present tendencies are maintained, a Nazi victory would involve a regression to the sort of feudalism that their barbarian ancestors did in fact impose on the ruins of the Roman Empire..."(Childe 1939:55)

Childe visualized a feudal society in which victorious Nazi's would create a self-contained economic system throughout which Germans would be scattered as a thin ruling caste conferring upon the subjugated masses the benefits of government by a chosen race. In short, "purest" Germans would become feudal overlords followed by a lower feudal hierarchy of Quislings. According to Childe, the Nazis were attempting to create a similar situation to that of the Roman Empire in 100 A.D. and their scream for Lebensraum was in reality a revival of a Stone Age war cry: "the only way to dispose our expanding population is to occupy more land in Europe at other people's expense". Thus a Nazi victory would represent a reversal of the most conspicuous trend in economic history since 3000 B.C. and could not be expected to increase production or enlarge the market as Braunthal maintained.

Although not written in direct response to Braunthal, Childe was asked by the University Labour Federation to comment on science and economics in ancient times and its relevance to contemporary world events. In an article entitled, "Man and Science from Early Times", Childe wrote:

"National Socialism purports to offer an escape from the contradiction of the capitalist system. Its actual policy for six years has been a regression towards the neolithic economy of self-sufficiency, exploded five thousand years ago. Its concrete economic programme is an expansion and unification under the auspices and the interests of a divinely appointed ruler-race, hierarchically organized for war--a refurbished device for concentrating wealth in the hands of a conquering warrior caste. Secondly it has in fact absorbed science into an all-embracing ideological orthodoxy that admits no discussion. The idea that this system, if victorious, might increase wealth and raise the standard of living even for the subjugated millions, entertained even by some socialists, is in manifest contradiction with all historical precedent..."(Childe 1941:3)

Childe went on to stress that both Stalinist and Nazi totalitarianism impedes chemical, technical, and physical research, but does not altogether stop it. Because totalitarianism slows the pace of technological progress and retards the speed of economic development Childe believed:

"The fundamental difference between the planned economy of the Soviet Union and that of the Third Reich is that the former has at least aimed at multiplying goods for consumption by the masses, whereas the latter has diverted output for the benefit of a militarist hierarchy organized on the leadership principle. Spread as a thin ruling caste over subjugated millions the social surplus would presumably continue to be used to satisfy their needs alone--i.e. a luxury consumption which notoriously cannot support an expanding industry..."(Childe 1939:55)

Combating Fascism

The tenor of Childe's letters, when combined with papers such as, "Is Prehistory Practical?", and, "Anthropology and Herr Hitler", demonstrate his contempt for the way in which Nazi

theoreticians drew upon archaeological research to lend scientific patina to political propaganda. In Childe's view, archaeology from the outset was explicitly in the anti-Fascist camp. In his first lecture to his students at Edinburgh University in 1933 Childe discussed the practical aspects of archaeological research. Childe argued prehistory was not about leaders or great men, rather it was concerned with all humanity because it showed that man was, and also had been, his own architect. By implication then, Childe believed man could continue to be his own architect for the future.

This was not a moot point in 1933 as Fascism was not only pandemic in Nazi Germany but was also winning favor in some parts of England. Because archaeology was concerned with all humanity, it was necessary that the results of archaeological research be made known to the layman as well as the cloistered student. In fact, R.B.K. Stevenson, who was in Childe's presence when the 1933 term began, recalled he "often said that the future of civilization was in the balance and his search for the truth in archaeological scholarship had an air of desperation" (Interview with Author).

The link between politics and archaeology was close and Childe wrote about the dangerous repercussions:

"The popular writers whom alone politicians are likely to read still prefer to repeat nineteenth century common places. Even specialists in one branch of science, like my own, are often unaware of what has been going on in the laboratories of workers in a cognate field. Moreover, it is not only in Germany that sentimental considerations are liable to disturb the objectivity of scientific judgment. Amongst an imperial

people ruling over subjects of diverse hue the racial theory of history has a powerful emotional and economic appeal. Only one who has obtained his ambition and security can afford to disregard that fact..." (Childe 1934:68).

Childe realized in both Nazi Germany and in England sentimental and political considerations were liable to disturb and twist the objectivity of scientific judgment. Accordingly, Childe wrote to Myres that politicians "only repeat so-called facts to support their own beliefs and specialists in one branch of science, like my own, are all too often unaware of what is going on" (Childe to Myres March 1, 1934). This concern was evident when Childe reacted to an article in the Edinburgh Evening News entitled "Are you an Aryan?". The newspaper story reported the findings of a preliminary conference held in preparation of the first general congress of the new International Association for Ethnology due to take place in Edinburgh in 1937.

Childe was suspicious of this organization. The International Congress of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Science was to hold its second meeting later in 1937 while the Ethnological Sciences Congress was to convene in Copenhagen the following year. What then was the nature of this third organization? Childe noted that it was entirely funded by the German Research Institute and was concerned that Nazi theorists were attempting to legitimize their racial theories via an international scientific setting. He was also worried that Germans were attempting to infiltrate British science, particularly since there were some who were already sympathetic with the fascist movement. In fact, he felt that

Frick was "only a stalking horse for enemies nearer home" (Childe to Myres Feb. 27, 34)³ Childe wrote to Nature to express his grave reservations about the political aims of this organization:

"In view of the connection between ethnology and the political philosophy of the Third Reich, one wonders whether this generosity is entirely inspired by a disinterested desire to further international science or an attempt to secure that recognition in kindred countries that the Nordic peoples must feel themselves a Schicksalgemeinschaft desired by Reichsminister fur Innern Dr. Frick... I feel bound to direct the attention of readers of Nature to this engagingly frank report lest they find themselves supporting an organization in competition with the two genuinely international congresses. These, it may be recalled, were established to deal with every aspect of the science of man precisely because the immediate successor of the pre-War 'Congress international d'anthropologie et d'archeologie prehistoriques' was held to be constituted on too definitely 'Ally' basis, to the detriment of scientific workers from 'ex-enemy' countries..."(Childe 1936:1074)

The German Reichsminister Frick, to whom Child referred, had recently released a circular entitled, "Directions for Guidance in the Teaching of History". Childe's concern for the way in which prehistory was being taught led him, and J.L. Myres, to translate Frick's circular for the English audience. The literal translation appeared in Nature, February 24, 1934. The circular contained the "guiding ideas" for historical instruction in all German schools and was transmitted to all educational authorities in Germany. These "directive principles" were also issued to the Union of School-book Publishers and served as the standard for the educational authorities in forming their opinion of historical textbooks submitted to them for adoption. Childe wrote to Myres:

"What seems to me needed is to reproduce Frick's Richtlinien verbatim without comment. I do not think the attitude of the majority of German prehistorians is at all obscure. Kossina made prehistory a really popular subject as a now arranged national Wissenschaft. As such it appealed to a large section of the general public and to the Government departments. As such it became better organized and offered more prospects of remunerative work than in any other country. Now very few of Kossina's assumptions are really ridiculous and none demonstrably false... But I do think it would be very unfortunate (no, dangerous) if what is at best a plausible theory were accepted uncritically as established scientific truth. Now that might easily happen when it is being constantly reiterated by people who in their own sphere do as I say good honest work. For that reason Frick's blatant statement of the consequences of the underlying motives of the theory seems to me valuable. Reading it in a scientific journal whose original workers who are liable to be unduly influenced by the prestige of German names will probably be enlightened. In the Times it would look merely like another anti-German propaganda..."(Childe to Myers November 25, 1933)

In this letter Childe stressed that prehistory in Germany differed in important ways from other scientific fields of inquiry. More specifically, prehistoric research was disproportionately financed by the state and researchers had everything to gain by becoming associated with the rising Nazi party. Those who followed the party line thus achieved academic legitimacy under the Nazis and advanced their careers by conducting research that was politically biased in favor of Nazi doctrine. Accordingly, excavations became political opportunities to prove the superiority of the master race and unite the "loyal" Germans. The SS, for example, funded large scale archaeological fieldwork aimed at bringing amateur archaeologists closer to soldiers who would reclaim their past. The SS also destroyed sites that distorted the "facts" of the prehistoric record. In short, archaeological

research included not just fieldwork but political indoctrination.

Childe was invited by the British scientific journal Discovery to examine the deductions based on archaeology made by the Third Reich and the degree to which they were accepted by scholars outside of Germany. In Childe's paper entitled, "Anthropology and Herr Hitler", he discussed Frick's "directive" and identified three basic postulates: first, the supreme importance of hereditary racial characters as molding factors in history; second, the superiority of the Nordic over other races; third, the identification of race with language and culture. For Childe the equations of race with culture and race with language were patently false, a point he shared with the ex-patriot German anthropologist Franz Boas. The coincidence of culture and race was really a corollary of the first postulate, incapable of direct demonstration by itself but standing or falling therewith. Childe held that when one comes to associate mental and bodily characters, there is no correlation whatsoever of prognostic value (here he cites Boas' study of racial characteristics of immigrants). Childe concluded that it is not possible to deduce the only significant characters of an individual or a nation from the sole tangible and scientifically admissible manifestations of race; therefore Frick's entire racial interpretation of prehistory was invalid.

On the matter of the superiority of the Nordic over other races, and on the importance of hereditary racial characters,

Childe refuted these points as well. In Germany the identification of "Aryans" with the "Nordic" and "Germanic" races became interchangeable under the Nazi movement. Hitler's claim that a "pure Nordic race" was the sole foundation of German culture could not be supported by archaeological evidence. Indeed, the concept of race could not be accepted nor was there any evidence of an "Aryan cradle". Moreover, the supreme importance of hereditary racial characters revealed to Childe that race was becoming a statistical concept from which one can deduce at most probabilities, and those not of a higher order and surely not of a racially superior society. Blood relationship cannot be confidently inferred from physical similarities. For Childe it was at best a probability that if a prehistoric skull exhibit the same peculiarities as a modern Nordic skull, its owner possessed the flaxen hair and blue eyes of the modern nordic. The probability according to Childe was "of the same kind as that which you deduce from the statistics of road accidents that you will be the next victim" (Childe 1934:68).

Childe earnestly believed archaeology had a real and practical reason behind it--to fight the abuses of scientific knowledge and endeavors for political gain. In writing to Myres about the publication of the Frick translation which appeared in Nature Childe stated:

"I am ordering some 10 copies of Nature unawed by the expense. But I really doubt whether they could profitably be sent to Germany. Only in days of exceptional bad temper do I desire to hurt people's religious convictions. And still more unfortunate folk who like Bersu

or Reinada cannot swallow the Frick faith but yet must conform verbally ought not be unnecessarily tormented. And copies bearing the Edinburgh postmark even though the labels be typewritten might all too easily be connected with the author of "Is Prehistory Practical?"..." (Childe to Myres February 27, 1934)

Here Childe is referring to the majority of German archaeologists who were subjected to complete and total domination by the Nazi party.⁴ Regardless of their own personal beliefs, all university professors had to teach official Nazi racial theory and accept state funding for their research. The acquiescence of these people undoubtedly led to the de facto sanctioning of National Socialist archaeology. While in retrospect one can question why they did nothing, Childe was clearly compassionate about their plight. For those who failed to accept, or who merely questioned, official theory were quickly persecuted or sent to concentration camps.

The Science of Archaeology:

Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History

In the Left Review, a short lived radical publication, Auden wrote that Left-wing intellectuals were not the sort of people who would give a "lecture on navigation while the ship was going down" (Auden 1933:79). The Left engaged in a vigorous movement for the defense of science against forces threatening it and for social responsibility in all areas of scientific endeavor. For example, meetings organized by the Left Book Club attracted as many as 10,000 people and its aim was simple: "to help in the

terribly urgent struggle for world peace and a better social and economic order and against fascism" (Morgan, K. 1989).

During the 1930s the Communist Party's turn toward a popular front proved to be extraordinarily successful. The ranks of those in the party began to swell and in Britain Communists and Social Democrats came together in exile, where there was a belated but very real anti-fascist unity. The impact of this broader intellectual climate on Childe can best be seen in his text, Man Makes Himself (1936). Three factors led Childe to write this book; first, his concern for the practicality of prehistory; second, the rise of Fascist governments in Italy, Japan, and Germany who were intent on world domination; third, his trip to the Soviet Union in 1935.⁵

While Childe had always been preoccupied with the evolution of man's development in prehistoric Europe, in Man Makes Himself he refined his interpretation to include the concept of progress.⁶ However, he stripped the concept of progress from all its nineteenth century baggage, specifically its connotation with advancement and improvement. He believed that not only had historian's personal interpretation of the past been influenced by the concept of progress but it also guided what was recorded. According to Childe, history in Britain was primarily restricted to recording the activities of kings, statesmen, soldiers, and wars. Allusions were made to economic conditions and scientific discoveries but history was viewed in terms of the growth of political and ecclesiastical systems. This sort of history was unscientific

and in Man Makes Himself he tried to combine his personal and political belief in progress with Marxist interpretations of history in an attempt to outline a more objective world view. He was, accordingly, also led to openly acknowledge his debt to Marxism for the first time:

"Marx insisted on the prime importance of economic conditions, of the social forces of production, and of the applications of science as factors in historical change. His realist conception of history is gaining acceptance in academic circles remote from the party passions inflamed by other aspects of Marxism. To the general public and to scholar alike, history is tending to become cultural history, greatly to the annoyance of Fascists like Dr. Frick. This sort of history can naturally be linked up with what is termed prehistory. The archaeologist collects classifies and compares the tools and weapons of our ancestors and forerunners, examines the houses they built, the fields they tilled, the food they ate (or rather discarded). These are the tools and instruments of production, characteristic of economic systems that no written documents describe..."(Childe 1936:7).

In Man Makes Himself, Childe argued that the dichotomy usually set up between prehistory and history as conventionally understood was a false and misleading one. Childe wrote "to distinguish and unpick the thread of progress, if such there be, running through history requires a view of history very different from that set out in formal text-books" (Childe 1936:10). Childe believed man's increasing control over the non-human environment, though discontinuous, was nonetheless progressive. While the concept of progress was accepted as fact in the past, it was being questioned in the years before World War II. In order to ascertain whether man was or was not progressing, a clearer understanding of the term was required. Hence, Childe sought to

base his findings and interpretation of the archaeological record on scientific considerations, viewing man's historical progress as the sequel or extension of biological evolution. Accordingly, Childe wrote to Crawford after Man Makes Himself appeared in print that:

"one of the reasons why I wrote the book was to suggest from an impersonal scientific standpoint, history may still justify a belief in progress in days of Depression as well as in the heyday of last century's prosperity..."(Childe to Crawford August 1, 1936: Bodleian Library Archive).

Similarly, in Man Makes Himself Childe wrote:

"Perhaps the conflicts and contradictions [as revealed in previous pages] themselves constitute the dialectics of progress. In any case they are the facts of history. If we dislike them that does not mean that progress is a delusion, but merely that we have understood neither the facts, nor progress, nor man..."(Childe 1936:)

Man Makes Himself was not without its faults. For Childe's belief in the materialist conception of history, together with the limitation of the archaeological record he had long since recognized, led him to stress the great importance of the economics in society.⁷ To a degree, Man Makes Himself was hampered by technological determinism. In his posthumously published "Retrospect", Childe explained some 22 years later he thought Man Makes Himself fell short of Marxism "in so far as it failed to emphasize that science can only be applied within an institutional framework that is itself not entirely economic" (Childe 1958:74). In 1936, however, Childe saw the means of production rather than the social relations of production or the economic relations between men expressed therein as the controlling factor over

social forms. Moreover, the impression given in Man Makes Himself was that man was more the servant of his technology than its master.

This point is well illustrated by the way Childe interpreted the word "revolution" in his characterization of both the Neolithic and Urban revolutions (he saw both as being analogous processes to the industrial revolution of the 18th century) (Childe 1936:9-12). In many respects then, Childe's use of a technological revolutionary model was a restatement of 19th century evolutionism and was based on the empirical information published in detail in his earlier academic works thereby establishing a scheme of progress. Childe identified the first revolution as being "neolithic", a time of transition from food gathering to agriculture in which man gained control over his own food supply. The economy of food production, as contrasted with hunting and gathering, provided man with the opportunity and motive for the creation of local surpluses. The second, revolution, labeled "urban" by Childe, transformed tiny villages of self sufficient farmers into populous cities, nourished by secondary industries. In the Near East, for example, the Urban revolution coincided with the development of metallurgy and other craft specializations. In a note stapled to changes to be made in the third impression of Man Makes Himself in 1939 Childe wrote:

"Marx had said that history was determined not only by the 'means of production' but also by the 'social relations of production'; amongst the determinants of these were external stimuli such as migration and diffusion. I have not stressed these stimuli

enough..."(Man Makes Himself, Institute of Archaeology Archive)

Obviously opposed to the dismal futility of a Fascist state, in Childe's next popular text, What Happened in History, he turned to an even more explicit Marxism as an analytical tool for interpreting the past. The future of society as Childe described it in What Happened in History was to be found in man's ability to make his own history--true, not as he likes, but with the material at his disposal. For Childe, if science and archaeology could prove progress does go forward it should make for deeper conviction and increased devotion to the struggle for socialism, the next logical development beyond capitalism. Thus in "Retrospect" Childe explained why he wrote What Happened in History, one of his best selling books:

"What Happened in History was a real contribution to archaeology as a concrete and readable demonstration designed for the bookstall public that history as generally understood can be extracted from archaeological data. I wrote it to convince myself that a Dark Age was not a bottomless cleft in which all traditions of culture were finally engulfed. (I was convinced at the time that European civilization--Capitalist and Stalinist alike--was irrevocably heading for a Dark Age.) So I wrote with more passion and consequently more pretensions to literary style than in my other works..." (Childe 1958:73)

Written during the darkest hours of World War II, What Happened in History traced man's progress from the hunting and gathering stage until the end of the Roman Empire. Childe believed that history and prehistory were part of a continuous process of man's adaption to the environment or of the adjustment of the environment to man's needs. Human history was treated

as a continuation of natural history and man's spiritual heritage was thought to be a social creation. Accordingly, Childe wrote:

"Evidentially societies of men cannot live on bread alone. But if every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God does not directly or indirectly promote growth, the biological and economic prosperity of the society that sanctifies them, that society and its god with it will vanish ultimately. It is this natural selection that guarantees that in the long run the ideals of society are just translations and inversions in men's minds of the material..."(Childe 1942:19)

The origins of speech, the invention of writing, the development of Greek science and of Christian theology, for example, were all treated as instances of progress and fully explicable within the limits of natural history of which archaeology was a part. Moreover, man made the superstitions and instruments of oppression as much as he made the sciences and instruments of production. In both he was expressing himself, finding himself, making himself.

In What Happened in History Childe also adopted an explicitly Marxist interpretation of the archaeological record, inasmuch he stressed the important role the economic basis of society had in influencing the sociological and ideological superstructures. Whereas in the first and second editions of The Dawn (1925 & 1927), Childe considered the development of bronze tools and weapons in Europe to have constituted the most distinctive and progressive feature of European history, now, analyzed from a Marxist perspective, he argued that the emergence of a bronze industry in Europe did not solve what he saw were the basic contradictions in the Neolithic economy. In What Happened in

History Childe maintained that the shortage of land led to competition and the subsequent desire for improved weapons. In central and northern Europe this had resulted in the creation of a ruling class extracting surplus from a conquered peasantry in order to pay for bronze metallurgy. The new industry was thus geared to the demands of a warrior aristocracy rather than for agricultural or manufacturing purposes. Childe wrote:

"The new bronze industry neither absorbed any appreciable proportion of the surplus rural population, nor equipped it to conquer virgin lands... the costly bronze armament merely consolidated the authority of ruling groups as did the knight's armour in the Middle Ages. Here Bronze Age burials reveal an aristocratic world with a richly developed upper class life based on organized luxury trade and the labour of the lower classes..."(Childe 1942:157-158)

Despite Childe's use of a basically Marxist model of change, his adoption of a Marxist analysis coincided with a diffusionist viewpoint as well (diffusion was emphasized as the main mechanism of change rather than internal economic progress). Yet it is also clear that the revulsion Childe felt for the abuses of prehistory on the part of the Nazis led him to forcefully rejected an Occidentalists approach. Indeed, there is not a single mention of any contribution made by the "Aryans" and he totally dismissed the Nazi use of the term; for Childe wrote "as used by the Nazis and anti-Semites generally, the term 'Aryan' means as little as the words 'Bolshie' and 'Reds' in the mouths of crusted Tories" (Childe 1942:155).

The point of view that guided Childe's overall synthesis was historical materialism. What set Childe apart from other scholars

was that he did not blindly follow Marxism nor contemporary Russian archaeological work. During the 1930s and 1940s Russian archaeologists were firmly evolutionary in their approach, solely concerned with the history of pre-capitalist societies. The archaeological record was understood in terms of reconstructing the societies that produced the artifacts; therefore, the ultimate aim of Russian archaeology was establishment of the forms of society which preceded capitalism (Miller 1956). Obviously, Childe could not adhere to such a dogmatic approach, as he was aware of the shortcomings of Marxist theories:

"The materialist concept of history asserts that the economy determines the ideology. It is safer and more accurate to repeat in other words what has been stated already: in the long run ideology can survive only if it facilitates the smooth and efficient functioning of the economy. If it hampers that, the society--and with it the ideology--must perish in the end. But the reckoning may be long postponed. An obsolete ideology can hamper an economy and impede its change for longer than Marxists admit..."(Childe 1942:17)

The Personal and Political Implications of Childe's Antifascism

In What Happened in History Childe succeeded in convincing himself that Europe had not entered a "Dark Age", however, he was not entirely cured of his pessimism. The cessation of fieldwork and trips abroad caused by the outbreak of World War II, together with the lack of students in Edinburgh deeply depressed him. Referring to the translation of the Frick directive printed

in Nature discussed earlier in this chapter, Childe wrote to Myres that he thought it would be of help to other scholars who were similarly depressed:

"I thought of sending my copies to other scholars... and colleagues in this country who are in these gloomy days are all too likely to abandon the robust idea of progress for the pessimistic philosophy of fascism..." (Childe to Myers February 27 1934)

During the war, the deprivations experienced by those living in Edinburgh were quite harsh. Food, gas, and virtually all the staples of life were in short supply. Childe was somewhat dependent upon the generosity of American friends such as Hugh Hencken, Hallam Movius, and Leslie White who all sent him canned and dried food as well as miscellaneous supplies. In fact, the primary reason why Antiquity was able to continue publishing throughout World War II was because O.G.S. Crawford had black market connections with Fortnum and Mason and paid a number of his publishing bills with fresh fruit and vegetables. Childe described the situation in Edinburgh in the following manner:

"All goes on with a sort of suspended normalcy. We have got over the shock which was bad and have made much better preparations to avoid or even defeat bombers than existed in Scotland before. Trains are running faster and with better lighting again. The situation is of course really very critical. Defense is certainly the best sort of attack in this particular case and during the suspense the best course is to maintain a facade of normalcy. So archaeology goes ahead though most museums are half packed up..." (Childe to Movius Dec.3, 1939: Harvard University, Peabody Library Archive)

While Edinburgh escaped the bombing that rained down on London, according to Basil Skinner, one of Childe's students in Edinburgh, in 1940 and 1941 there were a series of raids on the

Forth River Bridge and dog fights could be seen from the city center (the Forth River Bridge was strategically important link across the port but it was well protected by barrage balloons). In the summer of 1941 Childe was not sure if any students would be registering for the upcoming academic year. In this regard, Childe was not alone, for Dorothy Garrod, holder of the Disney Chair of Archaeology in Cambridge, had only two students. R.B.K. Stevenson, one of Childe's former students, recalled:

"I joined Childe's ordinary class which consisted of only a handful of people, probably fewer than half a dozen. During the war I don't think more about three or four people ever turned up to his lectures or attended his seminars. Some read his lecture notes. He organized the occasional excursion to a site outside of Edinburgh and on the practical side of things he allowed some of us to handle museum objects or draw maps. He simply didn't have many students as did all universities" (Interview with Author)

In 1939 Childe was released from his Munro lecturing duties during the war because of the appointment of H.J.H. Drummond as a part time lecturer at Edinburgh University. As a result of this action Childe's income dropped by one third.⁸ Drummond was originally appointed to lecture on paleolithic archaeology and physical anthropology but was also to take over the entire lecture course if Childe went abroad during the lecture term. According to Stevenson, Skinner, and Cruden, all former students at Edinburgh during the 1930s, and Denys Hay who joined the faculty in 1936, Childe believed he was being eased out of his position as Abercromby Chair of Archaeology because of his anti-Fascist writings. Edinburgh University was a conservative institution, with-

out a history of a strong liberal tradition.⁹ While Childe was not considered unique among those associated with the Left holding antifascist views, his base of operation in Edinburgh was certainly well outside the mainstream. Within the British archaeological establishment, whatever antifascist views were put forth originated from London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

Already isolated because he was perceived as an outsider, his outspoken antifascist views only further aggravated university officials.¹⁰ Denys Hay, Stevenson, Cruden, and Skinner each felt that among the intellectuals at Edinburgh there was a feeling that in the event of a successful invasion Edinburgh University officials would cooperate with Hitler. Indeed, they seemed to think that certain members of the faculty would go to great lengths to appease Hitler. Childe did not help matters for Cruden recalled he:

"founded the Edinburgh League of Prehistorians which of course was intended to be a play on the Young Communists League. It was just an ordinary departmental society. It distributed papers that had been written and reprinted various papers that had been published in archaeological journals that were unavailable. We even once published the Proceedings of the League of Prehistorians. He had various people come up from London to lecture like his friend O.G.S. Crawford. There was however nothing remotely Marxist about our little group and its title was probably meant to annoy those conservatively inclined" (Interview with Author)

While it may seem quite unusual that university officials would be aware of the nature of Childe's political views, Basil Skinner, felt it was impossible for them not to notice:

"It was an extraordinary time in the university history because the entire university was contained in the old college apart from divinity and medicine. Old

college comprised faculties of art and law and there was virtually no social sciences in those days. Everything else was basically contained in one small quadrangle. Edinburgh was quite a small institution. It was virtually impossible for university officials not to know what was being taught and said in classrooms as they were in many cases only a few doors away..

More generally, Skinner remembered Childe as being:

"very much towards the Left and that came across in one's knowledge of him. I saw him as a formidable character, eccentric in his behavior and one who had a reputation as a wild man. I think that he was an academic who knew he was different from his colleagues who were Conservative or Tory. He sat way out on a ledge and referred to himself as the Red Professor" (Interview with Author)

Denys Hay, who joined the Edinburgh University History department in 1936, recalled that Childe was especially bitter toward the university administration. This surfaced in Childe's delight in shocking University officials. Hay remembered Childe showed up at a formal University Senate hearing wearing shorts, an oil skin coat (World War I surplus) and a wide brim hat. "Proper attire", worn by almost all in attendance, consisted of top coat, and academic robes! This aspect of Childe, his joking and seeming delight in surprising people, took many forms. For example, in 1935 Childe sent not only his friends postcards from the Soviet Union but even sent a card, signed in cyrillic no less, to the President of Edinburgh! Stevenson characterized this side of Childe's personality in the following manner:

"It was always difficult with Childe to know what was deep and what was superficial. I suspect that will always be one of the problems in writing about Childe, it was the case in knowing him. He had quite a strong sense of humor which involved the pulling of the leg of the serious minded people who would have to take some of his views too seriously. He had deeply held convic-

tions and views in those days and there was a sort of amusement at making people see the froth and not the polarity"(Interview with Author)

Evidence of Childe's marginalization at Edinburgh abounds. For example, Childe's office and that of the prehistory department, albeit rather small, was moved to the worst possible location on the Edinburgh campus. In fact, the room where Childe regularly taught had a leaky roof and on rainy days Childe lectured while holding an umbrella! Skinner, Cruden, and Stevenson all recall Childe commenting before giving his lecture which resulted in the publication of "Is Prehistory Practical?" something to the extent that "oh well there goes next year's budget!". His students also recalled that Childe required Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History for his courses but the Edinburgh University Library never found time to purchase the book nor would some local book shops stock it. Moreover, in the Left Review and other liberal journals, there were increasing reports of violence directed against book shops that carried books by well known anti-fascists such as Childe.¹¹ Indeed, in one such report the book shop attacked was located near Edinburgh University and had a display of the Library of Science and Culture in its window.

Although he continued to apply the materialist conception of history throughout the remainder of the 1930s, in the world of politics, Childe was convinced the dogmas of Fascism and of Marxism--Leninism could be equal threats to humanity. In fact before Childe visited the Soviet Union for the first time in

1935, he cleared his desk and made arrangements for a possible successor at Edinburgh should he not return.¹² As the war went on, and Britain seemed closer to defeat, Childe felt he had two options: emigrate to the United States or commit suicide. Childe was convinced that in the event of a successful invasion of England he would be on a Nazi death-list. Rather than be executed at the hands of the Nazis, he would have preferred to drown himself in a canal.¹³ Childe felt the United States was a safe haven for political exiles for only a year earlier Childe wrote to Ernest Hooton that:

"European civilization may be obliterated any day by a new war, and the fruits of our work, if any, may only be preserved in the U.S.A. But there owing to your democratic tradition the survival value of any truth depends upon its appreciation by the masses and not only its acceptance by a clique of cloistered scholars"(Childe to Hooton August 30, 1938: Harvard University, Peabody Library Archive)

There is a great deal of evidence that Childe seriously considered immigrating to the United States.¹⁴ Foremost among them is that during his previous visits in 1936, 1937, and 1939 he deposited fairly large sums of money in a Boston based bank (he was well paid by Harvard, University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Pennsylvania as a visiting scholar). In fact, he wrote to R.P. Dutt that he "was disgustingly rich" and added that only when he "was in the U.S.A. do I have spasms of sympathy for capitalism" (Childe to Dutt August 19, 1938). Childe chose Boston as a repository for his funds as a number of refugees he knew were hired by MIT. Yet in September of 1941 Childe asked Movius about the procedures involved in transferring the

money he deposited in the Boston bank back to England. As already mentioned, the Munroe Lectureship which represented a third of Childe's income ended and he was short of cash. Negotiations with the banks were somewhat prolonged and after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor Childe wrote to Movius that his reason for depositing the money in the United States no longer existed:

"As far as I am concerned there is no point in keeping the money in America rather than in Britain and the British Govt. would I imagine prefer to have the exchange and it is in fact entitled to demand it at any moment. As you will remember my reason for depositing it there was the suspicion that Chamberlain was going to make an alliance with Hitler in which case Britain would be an unhealthy place for me--but I enormously overestimated Chamberlain's intelligence and underestimated the pressure that democracy is still able to exert in Britain! (Childe to Movius Jan.27, 1942: Harvard University, Peabody Library Archive)

Fortunately for Childe, the tide of World War II turned in the allies favor. However, the political climate within the United States changed dramatically in the post war era. Far from being a place where he could pursue his academic interests, with the onset of the Cold War Childe would undoubtedly have been the victim of red baiting.

Conclusion

According to modern historians, prior to Hitler's rise to power in Germany, disappointment, economic distress and national humiliation produced a romantic longing for a return to earlier glory. This longing resulted in the resolve of fascists to re-

claim by force what they thought rightfully belonged to them historically. Thus the question of the origins of the Indo-Europeans became a central tenant in the philosophy of fascism and was subject to world wide propaganda. For Childe the radical transformation of German society represented the abandonment of scientific reasoning and free thought. The threat to mankind was overwhelming and Childe waged a literal war on the abuse of science at the hands of Nazi theorists.

In the post war era, however, a new threat emerged which was more insidious than the overt threat of fascism and equally dangerous--the Cold War. The assault on free thought during Hitler's rise to power and that during the Cold War were quite similar, in fact, an editorial in the Marxist journal Modern Quarterly concluded that:

"It is clear that writers and thinkers in the United States are faced with a grave choice. If they yield to anti-communist hysteria or are silent because they are afraid, they bear the same responsibility that is borne by German intellectuals who cooperated or were silent when Hitler prepared for war. If those who stand by their principles maintain their ground, they will rally all lovers of freedom to the cause of world peace and national independence..." (Modern Quarterly, 7:121)

The dramatic shift in the political climate after World War II in Britain and the United States is truly one of the dark hours in the history of the free world. The impact this era had on scholars is not popularly appreciated and it clearly illustrates that academics, whether they be radicals like Childe or conservative, are not immune from the broader sociopolitical climate. Indeed, in the next chapter I will demonstrate that

because of Childe's affiliation with various Leftist groups he was not allowed to enter the United States and his theoretical books were largely blacklisted.

Notes

1. One of the most influential cultural events in Germany before the start of World War II, an exhibition called *Entartete Kunst* or "Degenerate Art", was staged in ten rooms of the Archaeological Institute in Munich. This exhibit was designed to mock and ridicule all forms of art that were not consistent with official Germanic art. Thus artists such as Van Gogh, all the impressionists, and modernists such as Picasso, had their work displayed to illustrate how inferior they were. The show was a huge success, attracting over three million visitors. Clearly, this is indicative of the respect and high visibility the subject received in Germany.

2. In a 1934 paper entitled, "Archaeology and the State", Clark made no reference whatsoever to state funded excavations, whereas in Archaeology and Society he advocated the need for public funding. In Clark's text, he attributed the neglect of archaeology in Britain to the cultural discontinuity wrought by the industrial revolution (i.e. lacking a peasantry; Clark 1939:211). Childe took strong exception to this and in a review of Clark's book stated that

In my opinion the disabilities imposed by Nazism have been unduly minimized, those due to Soviet communism exaggerated by a reliance on tainted sources; and the plight of archaeology in Great Britain is not due to the divorce of the people from the land by the Industrial Revolution, but to government by an oligarchy imbued with the ideology of feudal barons and oriental satraps..."(Childe 1939:468)

3. In the most explicit statement about the circumstances leading

up to the war Childe to the New Statesman that another war to make the world safe for democracy:

"could only have the same disastrous results as the last and must, in fact, destroy all that in Britain still deserves the name civilization. The actual device adopted to avoid such a war, however, threatens to destroy civilization no less surely, if less dramatically. Great Britain is, it would seem, not merely to tolerate the violent... dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. She is to assist the Nazi tyranny in imposing that dismemberment on the last outpost of formal democracy in Central Europe... This bit of 'foreign policy' must have internal repercussions the effects of which are perhaps already perceptible. A docile press which, even a week ago, was displaying some objectivity in its news from central Europe and its comments thereon, now hailing Hitler's terms as 'Chamberlain's peace plan' adopts uncritically the dictator's thesis about the Sudeten Germans. Is it premature to see in this change of tone the working of government controls, no less potent because extralegal, in the interests of Germanic philosophy? Then, when a new war threat has created the needful state of panic and a new 'peace plan' is needed to help Hitler 'rescue the oppressed German minority' in, say, Schleswig (i.e. dismember Denmark) the theory of relativity can be quietly expunged from scientific literature published in Britain, our debt to pre-Aryan Indians and sumerians suppressed in histories adjusted to an anglicised version of Hitler's racialism and art and letters purged of Semitism. German intellectuals who hailed Hitler as their savior from Marxism are now helpless to protect against the consequent sterilisation of science and art. British intellectuals who preferred peace in alliance with Hitler to war in alliance with the USSR may all too easily have cause to wonder whether the bombed ruins of London and Berlin would not have been better than the skeleton of a civilization condemned to stagnation by the denial of free inquiry..."(Childe 1938:451-452)

4. While Childe's concern about not wanting to send mail to colleagues in Germany that bore an Edinburgh post mark might seem like an exaggeration, his reticence was well founded. The privacy of mails did not exist in Germany after Hitler assumed power and as we have already seen Childe had experienced censorship first

hand. The German propaganda minister Dr. Goebbels endorsed postal tampering as being within the interest of the Nazi state. As early as 1934 the British Postal Authorities lodged two official complaints with the German post office regarding tampering. A number of "Nazi political police" were stationed at post offices charged with opening all letters that looked as if they might contain anything that the Nazi's might be interested in. In addition, all mail leaving Germany was examined by German customs officials (Steel 1942).

5. Man Makes Himself does not depart in radical ways from the works Childe published prior to 1936. Papers such as, "Is Prehistory Practical?", "Changing Methods and Aims in Prehistory", and "Anthropology and Herr Hitler", all show the evolution of Childe's thought. What was different about Man Makes Himself is that for the first time Childe's writings for a popular audience were read by a vast cross section of the population as well as by his colleagues. It is also interesting to note here that Man Makes Himself, like The Dawn, received mixed reviews, with the sole exception of O.G.S. Crawford who wrote in Antiquity that it was "the most stimulating, original and convincing contribution to the history of civilization which we have ever read" (Crawford 1936:404).

6. He also explored the decline of the Orient and concluded that the class structure, a result of the accumulation of surplus necessary for the inception of urbanism, was not conducive to further growth or change. Its main detrimental effect, he argued,

was the separation of theoretical from practical knowledge. Thus while the urban revolution was made possible by science, its results were exploited by superstition, for the main beneficiaries were priests, kings and the upper classes. Accordingly, Childe wrote "magic rather than science was thereby enthroned and invested with the authority of temporal power" (Childe 1936:13)

7. Childe would go on to stress these stimuli in later writings but in the first three editions of Man Makes Himself man's progress appeared autonomous. Diffusionism in particular would be stressed in the 1939 3rd edition of The Dawn where he made much more use of the role of external stimuli. Changes in the environment, internal economic progress, and external stimuli, when joined together, acted as determinants of man's progress, making the process not only scientific, but also historical. Nevertheless, Childe was reluctant to use diffusionism because of "embittered hostility to and fear of the archaeological buttresses of Hitlerism enhanced my reluctance to recognize the positive aspects of all European barbarisms" (Childe to Myres January 30, 1939). Childe had always opposed the excesses of diffusionism and during the war years opposed almost all forms of diffusionism. Alfred Jenkin, an archivist and for many years treasurer of the British Communist Party History Group recalled that around 1935 Childe gave a lecture to the Cambridge University Archaeological Field Club

"in which he called attention to the fact that in Melbourne it was still considered correct to wear a top hat of a type which had become unfashionable in Eng-

land, but that the richer citizens rode in American cars of a model which had not yet penetrated the British market. If civilization had been destroyed that night the archaeologists of the future might deduce that top hats and motor cars had been invented in Australia but that only top hats had been diffused to England and only cars to America. Minns, a good archaeologist but conservative in his views, commented during the discussion, 'It seems that the Nazis believe in diffusion but the Bolshies don't'..."(Institute of Archaeology Archive)

8. Childe, as with all those employed by Edinburgh University in the 1930's, was not well paid. Indeed, the Abercromby Chair, despite its prestige, was not considered a full time position (Hay 1983). To augment his income, for many years Childe gave the Munro lectures which were reprinted in the Scotsman.

9. For historical studies of about the University of Edinburgh see Galager 1988, Hay 1983, Donaldson 1983 and Phillipson 1983.

10. Childe was deeply pessimistic about the future and isolated in Edinburgh. He wrote to Crawford that in the future he believed:

"a tiny minority thinking we will live rationally thinking has provided the vast mass with the equipment ill adapted to their epipaleolithic mentality but has on the whole grievously (and I think culpably) failed to sell as Yanks would say a rational mode of life. Its bloody for us to be extinguished but perhaps a dark age is needed for the slow incubation of a new and broader Renaissance..."(Childe to Crawford Jan. 6, 1940: Bodleian Library Archive).

11. Childe's acerbic attitude and writings critical of the British Government's policies before and during World War II certainly did not endear him to conservatives. In October of 1939 the Daily Worker, the official organ of the Communist Party, sent a questionnaire on peace negotiations to various well known

Left-wing figures such as George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, R.R. Stokes, J.B.S. Haldane, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, and Childe himself. Childe's response makes it plain that he distrusted Chamberlain, for he wrote in answer to the question, "Are you in favour of peace negotiations?", he replied "Only provided such do not offer another Munich victory to Hitlerism". Childe felt that a peace settlement should be guaranteed by "a revised and strengthened League of Nations, in the establishment of which the USSR, the Scandinavian democracies, Holland, Switzerland, etc., and if possible, the USA, should take the lead" (Childe 1939:6). Childe also advocated the abolition of the colonies, and the transference of governmental authority to an international administration.

12. This was told to me by several of Childe's former students. In fact, Childe was harsh with his opinions about the Soviet Union and had little optimism for the future of a communist Europe. Of the German-Soviet pact he wrote "No doubt Stalin's action will facilitate and accelerate the spread of communism. But however much it may have been justified by Chamberlain's past policy it does not consolidate my wavering faith that this is the hope for humanity" (Childe to Crawford October 1, 1939). Childe also refused to sign a famous letter printed in the London Times in which numerous members resigned from the Communist Party for the signing of the German-Soviet nonaggression agreement. Childe wrote to Crawford that he would not give the British Fascists the satisfaction of signing a letter that was critical of a Communist

regime. I must note here, that one should not conclude he was, therefore, uncritical of the communist party and developments in Stalinist Russia but rather was quite bitter toward conservatives in Edinburgh.

13. Years later, in a letter to O.G.S. Crawford after the war had turned in favor of the allies, Childe thanked him for talking him out of suicide, an action he thought "may as yet be inevitable but is not necessary at this time"(Childe to Crawford August 4, 1946). In discussing whether Childe committed suicide at the end of his life, Stevenson recalled a conversation and walk he took with Childe in the early part of 1940:

"I was quite sure it was suicide from the very beginning, although the grounds for saying that are thin. But I do vividly recall in 1940 when there was serious talk of invasion I went for an afternoon's walk with Gordon into Edinburgh. We were talking about the dangers all around, the collapse of France and so on. He said that his name would certainly be on some Nazi list for extermination. He said he would drown himself in a canal before they came for him. It was a matter of fact statement, that this was going to happen in the circumstances of an invasion. Clearly, the idea of suicide was not foreign to him"(Interview with Author)

14. Among the reason why I believe he considered immigrating to the United States include he fact sent a complete draft of his manuscript, The Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles, to Hugh Hencken at Harvard University. There were two possible reasons for this: first, Childe had gone to great lengths to obtain maps to illustrate this work, many of which were considered classified information and it is possible he did not want these to fall into the hands of Germans. Secondly, in the event he did commit suicide, there was a chance the work might be

published since it was a completed draft (he was also working with a U.S. publisher at the time).

Chapter 6
The Politics of Archaeology

Introduction

During the 1930s, masses of unemployed men and women experienced the chaos of the Depression and the unfamiliar pangs of hunger and despair. These were fertile conditions for the growth of the Communist organizations in Britain and the United States. However, with the onset of World War II the misery of the Depression was replaced by the violent horrors of war. Yet at war's end, a new epoch of repression began in the 1940s. The thirties were somehow characterized as being historically different from other times of mass hunger and economic depression. They were, after all, a bad time, the time of the Reds, a time not to be discussed, indeed to be blocked out of the national consciousness. If the thirties were mentioned at all, they were spoken of in terms of suspicion and disdain. The social and political atmosphere became oppressive (Hicks 1953; Hook 1987). Historians and politicians of the 1940s gave the new generation a very different interpretation of reality, in which former heroes and saviors became villains and despoilers. They maintained that the Left cared nothing for science, literature, or truth; the left, they assured everyone, was driven by a blind and fanatic loyalty to an alien philosophy--Marxism communism. The Left's "goal" and "mission", on this account, was to capture American culture and preach their foreign philosophy (Schwartz 1960).

In this historical context, scholars such as Childe in Britain and those on the Left in the United States, suddenly came

under attack for their work. In defense, many scholars changed the style of their writing, expunging references to Marx, Engels, or any twentieth century author with a Left-wing affiliation. Other scholars turned their backs on former colleagues and joined politicians in "Red baiting" (Hicks 1953; Hook 1984; Lewis 1988; Schrecker 1986). Scholarly cooperation and unity of purpose were replaced by mutual suspicion and distrust. Drawing on unpublished letters and personal interviews, in this chapter I shall explore the ways in which this chilly climate affected Childe, a man closely identified with the Left. For our present, rather confused, picture of his intellectual career is itself a victim of McCarthyist censorship.

Childe's role in the establishment Past and Present is critical to any understanding of his predicament during the Cold War. Originally printed by Cobbett Press, as series of books, Past and Present, sought to analyze contemporary problems in light of their social context. Childe's important theoretical book, History (1947), appeared as volume 6 and provoked a knee jerk reaction by those on the Left and Right. Marxist scholars were critical of Childe's interpretations of the historical record, while conservatives used this work to justify blocking the publication of the series in the United States.¹ After the book series collapsed, the historical journal adopted the title Past and Present in 1952. Designed at the outset as a journal devoted to linking Marxist and non-Marxist scholars, it sought to bridge the acrimonious divide between these scholars. Childe's participation in

each of these publishing efforts is indicative of his desire to attract as wide an audience as possible for his work. These very efforts had serious political consequences during the Cold War for Childe was unable to gain access to the United States because of his affiliations with various Left-wing organizations and the Left leaning cast of his scholarship.

The Series Past and Present

The series "Past and Present: Studies in the History of Civilization designed to Show How History Can Help", was organized by a paid board in 1945 and was published by Cobbett Press. The editorial board consisted of Childe, Benjamin Farrington, Sydney Herbert, T.L. Poulton, and Bernhard Stern. In essence, the series was designed to illustrate why the "citizen of a modern democracy needs history". According to the board, man was faced with all sorts of social and political problems that had been conditioned by history and could only be solved in the light of history. The board was convinced that "the story of mankind can, in the light of present knowledge, be simply told in a way that can help the solution to current problems". As originally formulated, the series was to include forty-eight volumes on a range of topics. Farrington wrote to Bernhard Stern, the American editor, that:

"the series will not be announced as specifically Marxist. It looks as if about 50% of the writers would be Marxists, and there is of course no ban on references to Marxist literature. But our non-Marxist col-

laborators are chosen for their eminence in their subjects, and our confidence is that if they are true scientists they can not help assisting the development of Marxist thought..."(Farrington to Stern August 1, 1945.

Between 1945 and 1950 the British publisher, Cobbett Press, sought to have this series printed in the United States. By June 1947, seven volumes were in print in Britain with the same number of volumes proposed to appear in the States. As early as December 1945, the American publisher Henry Holt had expressed a "keen interest" in obtaining the exclusive rights to the series (Stern to Farrington December 20, 1945). Holt was particularly impressed with Childe's book History, volume 6 in the series, and offered to purchase the copyright (Farrington to Stern October 17, 1945). Holt signed a contract with Cobbett Press to print the entire series and the ink was barely dry when, at a substantial loss of money and paper, Holt backed out of the agreement. Stern wrote to Farrington that he felt Holt did not want to be associated with a series of books that could be considered as having a "political slant".

By the end of 1947, only two publishers in the States expressed any interest in the series: Barnes and Noble and Schuman Books. Cobbett Press eventually signed an agreement with Barnes and Noble, who acquired the exclusive rights to the series in the United States. Despite having signed a contract they suddenly reneged. Barnes and Noble gave superficial reasons for their decision not to print the series, but an employee, whom Stern characterized as being "liberal", wrote privately stating that

the series:

"contained valued actual material, but the interpretations have been systematically slanted in the direction of communist philosophy, i.e., that of Marx and Engels. There is a background of deliberate propaganda here. The government officials have advised us that it would pay to be somewhat cautious about something like this... V. Gordon Childe's History in particular which you cited for approval, you may or may not have noticed that for chapter 7, "History as a Creative Process", the bibliography listed consists of works by Marx, Engels, Stalin, Lenin--and no one else! This is unacceptable..."(Smith to Stern February 18, 1949)

The obvious message of Smith's letter was that the series and its incorporation of authors with a Marxist viewpoint was unacceptable to "government officials". In Stern's mind, there was no doubt:

"that the reason the series was dropped was because of the complaints that it was Marxist, in spite of the fact that many letters of praise were forthcoming. (The company has dropped plans to publish my Readings in Anthropology, which was to accompany Outline of Anthropology). This is but a reflection of the general spirit of hostility toward anything that has the flavor of communism, or Marxism or is any way identified with the Soviet Union, that is being whipped up by powerful forces in this country. Committees to investigate Un-American activities, both on a federal and state level, are intimidating intellectuals, as are loyalty oaths, and the trials of the Communist league on the charge of conspiring to teach and advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force and violence...All through the country faculty members are being dropped, or not reappointed, who have been identified with a position left of center. Barnes and Noble evidently feels it might jeopardize its sales of books if it published the series..."(Stern to Farrington May 7 1949)

From a strictly business point of view, Barnes and Noble's concern about publishing a series such as Past and Present was well founded. Roughly half the volumes in the series were openly Marxist, and despite having lost a considerable sum of money,

Barnes and Noble was making a sound but difficult decision. In the late 1940s Barnes and Noble was the largest textbook house in the States. As part of its contract with Cobbett Press, it had agreed to promote the entire series. In conducting such promotions, it was necessary for the publisher to deal with, and establish a rapport with, legislators, and governors as well as with the politically appointed school superintendents and directors of education. Thus Barnes and Noble, like other large publishers, was very sensitive to anti-communist hysteria that dominated the day. In fact, by 1952 the entire publishing industry was subjected to intense Red Baiting (Aptheker 1953; Aronson 1953; Hodges 1951). For example, under the Smith Act, Alexander Trachtenberg, the Managing Director of International Publishers, faced five years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine for "publishing and circulating articles, magazines and newspapers advocating the principles of Marxism-Leninism".² Other publishers affected included John Gates, editor of the Daily Worker, V.J. Jerome, editor of Political Affairs, and Al Richmond and Philip Connelly, editors of the San Francisco Daily People's World. Even the nations oldest publishing house--Little, Brown--was singled out by Counterattack (a Red Baiting tabloid) (Hodges 1951).

Cobbett Press eventually gave up the attempt to have the entire series printed by one publisher and began to sell the copyright of individual volumes in the series. Childe's book, History, held up as one of the most "politically" unacceptable in the series, was published in the States in 1953 by Schuman Books,

six years after its original publication in Britain. Schuman, whom Stern characterized as a "young and naive man", was the only publisher willing, or foolish enough, to print Childe's book.³ In addition to History, Schuman published a limited number of other books from the Past and Present series; these volumes included From Savagery to Civilization by Grahme Clark, The Decline of the Roman Empire in the West by Frank Walbank and The Feudal Order by Marion Gibbs.

Schuman's choices were an eclectic mix, for the authors ranged from the conservative Grahme Clark to Marxist oriented scholars such as Childe, Gibbs, and Walbank. Schuman promoted these books just as they should have been, as inexpensive reviews of the literature for the educated layman or college student. Sold for only one dollar, the "Schuman College Paperbacks" were technically not a series but these small volumes were described on the back cover as "historical studies developed through the collaboration of leading British and American scholars. The books were designed to show how the history of civilization--of arts and institutions of many kinds--can help in the understanding and solution of contemporary problems". This blurb is a direct paraphrase of the original description of the series Past and Present series as written by Childe, Farrington, Herbert, and Poulton!

Stern's characterization of Schuman as "young and naive" may not have been perfectly accurate. A careful examination of the Cobbett Press volume History and the American edition, retitled, What is History?, reveals the text was unchanged. Yet there is

one significant difference between the two editions--in the Schuman edition the bibliography for chapter seven, "History as a Creative Process", has been omitted. The only references deleted from the book include the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. Obviously, Schuman deliberately censored these citations hoping to avoid political controversy.

The Importance of Childe's Book History

The importance of History is indicated by the diverse reception it received in the United States and Britain. After History was published in Britain in 1947 it received no less than seven reviews in Labour Monthly and Modern Quarterly. In sharp contrast, the American edition, What is History?, was ignored by academic reviewers. In fact it received only one patently unfair review in Harpers Quarterly, a prominent literary magazine. Entitled, "Chains for the Mind", the reviewer not only characterized Childe's book but all books that examined communism as being "dangerous propaganda". The reviewer, Gilbert Highet, singled out Childe's book for severe criticism, which he characterized as being a:

"a lucidly written piece of propaganda called What is History?... In this handbook he works through and discards various widely accepted theories of the pattern of history, in order to build up to History as a Creative Process, which turns out to be Dialectical Materialism as expounded by Marx and Engels. His chapter is filled with Marxist distortions and oversimplifications, carefully disguised so as to be acceptable to an eighteen-year old... This book seems to me to be a cheap piece of deception disguised as a dispassionate textbook: so slanted that the middle-of-the-road teach-

er would find it hard to use as an unbiased text even for discussion, while a skillful fellow traveler could implant its patterns as firmly as a tattoo..."(Highet 1953:98)

Highet was obviously antagonistic and he firmly believed there was sinister intent in Childe's work. According to Highet, the irreducible facts behind the present turmoil over communism were the danger of war with the Soviet Union and the "proven" activity of some American communists in the Soviet cause. There is also quite openly an element of fear in which Highet feels it is possible to "corrupt" an eighteen-year old's mind. This review clearly illustrates the historical context in which Childe was writing. Americans were fearful of the H-bomb, of the nuclear arms race, of scientists, of spies, of communism, of the Soviets and the Chinese, of the unfavorable balance of payments and unemployment, and, of course, of fear itself. Americans, particularly the United States military, were coming to terms with the fact that they did not have a ten year lead over the Soviet Union in atomic missiles, as they had supposed. The Rosenberg's were sentenced to death for spying and only six months prior to the publication of What is History? Alger Hiss went on trial for perjury in denying he had been a member of the Communist Party, with horrific stories of a ghost typewriter, and of top secret microfilm found inside a pumpkin.⁴ With this broader sociopolitical climate in mind, Highet concluded his review of Childe's book and the Schuman college paperbacks by arguing that:

"These books neatly illustrate one aspect of the problem of academic freedom. They remind us how few young students have a critical sense strong enough to

enable them to resist the winning and authoritative suggestions of a manual or teacher. In fact, there is a fundamental difference between teaching students communism and teaching students about communism. Any competent sociologist can do the latter; Communists will do only the former, and are therefore (even if disguised in academic robes) to be classified as propagandists rather than calm scholars and unbiased teachers..."(Highet 1953:98)

While the American edition of History almost never made it into print, and was then blasted in its sole review, the reception of the work in Britain was quite different. Despite firmly endorsing Marxist historiography, Leftist scholars were very critical of Childe's work. The significance of History is to be found in the content of its reviews, for it prompted a polemical clash involving scholars such as Christopher Hill, S. Lilley, George Thomsen, Sam Aaronovitch, and John Prime. In Modern Quarterly, Hill and Thomsen each criticized Childe's lack of attention to the role class played in the development of human history (Hill 1949:262; Thomsen 1949:267). In a second review of History published in Labour Monthly, Thomsen pointed out that Childe did not deal with the inherent contradiction in the growth of capitalist society (Thomsen 1949:157). Lilley severely criticized Childe for the manner in which he interpreted and defined the Marxist conception of history and the mode of production in particular. Finally, Aaronovitch (1949) and Prime (1949) came to Childe's defense and took exception to the manner in which Hill and Lilley reviewed History. Aaronovitch and Prime each considered Lilley's and Hill's critique of History to be based on wrongful readings of Marxist texts.

What Childe's critics failed to appreciate was how very different the problems a historian faced were from those that confronted Childe as an archaeologist. According to Childe, the material that archaeology deals with consists mainly of the means of production and anything about the relations of production was a matter of inference. The archaeological approach Childe pursued made it nearly impossible to adhere to a traditional Marxist model with its emphasis on social relations.⁵ Childe maintained that from an archaeologist's viewpoint production is always carried out socially and that by extension the relations of production can be brought into the picture. Thus Childe did not ignore the relations of production but rather realized they were not as readily available to the archaeologist. Implicit in Childe's general discussion is the idea that class struggle is a motive force in history, however, this point is not made explicit because of the limitations of the archaeological record.

While Childe did not give as much attention to the role class played in man's struggle for civilization as his Marxist contemporaries would have liked, he certainly was well aware of the role class played in society and its relationship to ideology. Only a few years later, Childe wrote in Social Evolution, one of his most well know works, that:

"Under suitable conditions we can learn a great deal about the mode of production as well as the means of production. The role of secondary and primary industry and trade can be estimated from observed facts. The extent of the division of labour and the distribution of the product can be inferred with some confidence. Plausible guesses can be made as to the existence of slaves, the status of women, and the inheritance of

property. Even the ideological superstructures can be the subject of cautious hypotheses..(1951:34)

The main problem with History was not Childe's knowledge of the principles of Marxism, or the role class played in man's social evolution, but that he did not confront the polemics of Marxist scholarship at the time. This was undoubtedly interpreted by his more zealous contemporaries as a lack of commitment. In short, he was not dogmatic enough and failed to adhere to the party line. In the end, Childe was simply misunderstood and was labeled a "communist" by his Right-wing colleagues and chastised by Marxists for his unconventional attitudes. Because of this he remained particularly sensitive to the intellectual atmosphere as his work satisfied no political agenda.

What Childe's critics did not consider was why he wrote History in the first place. Childe realized that in studying history one has to be cognizant of the political importance of its study. On the very first page of History Childe wrote that the problem at present is "control of the social environment--of the relations between individuals, groups nations and classes". History and the way it was written was Childe's focus and on this topic he made two observations: first, that the historian has almost always belonged to, or at least been closely identified with the ruling class; second, that the writing of history involves a selection of what is regarded as important or memorable.

Childe believed that within certain limits there could be a "generalized history of institutions and techniques based upon

abstraction and comparison of several concrete histories of specific institutions and inventions" (Childe to White Jan. 1, 1946). Childe wrote to White that he wondered:

"how far this is compatible with the 'evaluation' of cultures. Our culture is surely one of those which have to be evaluated but the values by which they are judged must inevitably be drawn from our culture. On what grounds was the culture of the British 'far superior to that of the poor blacks of Tasmania'. Because it was more efficient in altering various ends approved by that culture in particular... This is the difficulty of all social sciences & we deceive ourselves if we present as objective a hierarchy based upon the implicit assumption of these values... I think one can get out of this difficulty only by as appeal to history..."(Childe to White Feb.1, 1948)

In writing to White, Childe was pointing out that there are many criteria, both subjective and objective, by means of which cultures may be evaluated. According to Childe, the value of the study of history lay in its discovery of scientific laws, for they provided maxims for action. However, in a letter to White, Childe noted that "scientific laws are descriptions of how things do happen, not prescriptions why they should happen (Childe to White Sept. 18, 1948). For Childe, the historian must be aware that:

"The order of history is much more subtle than that of any painting, the integration far more complicated than in any living creature. No general formula nor abstract chart will disclose that order fully: that can only be reproduced in the concrete whole of history itself. which no book and no library of books, however vast, could contain. Fortunately some aspects of the historical process exhibit its order more simply than the rest, and Marx pointed out just these aspects are the most decisive... Now the most simplest aspect of historical order is... the progressive extension of humanity's control over external nature by the invention and discovery of more efficient tools and processes. Marx

and Engels were the first to remark that this technological development is the foundation for the whole of history conditioning and limiting all other human activities..."(Childe 1947:69-70)

In the last chapter of History, "History as a Creative Process", Childe makes it quite clear that the most intellectually and politically satisfying interpretation of the historical record was Marxist historiography. Childe found the materialist conception of history the most realistic and scientifically adequate approach to the interpretation of culture history. Childe makes it quite clear that this conception is "not to be used slavishly" or regarded as sacred dogma. Indeed, Childe repeatedly insists that progress is not inevitable, even the survival of the human species is not guaranteed. He also questioned the value of Marxian analyses in a letter to Leslie White:

"Probably the Marxian analysis applies only to a world economy in a world state that does not exist yet. It is the inevitable result--if your atomic bombs don't first sterilize the whole human family--but has not arrived yet. The American system's collapse may be postponed as that of the British was by imperialism, the British & other Europeans (outside USSR) being converted into an external proletariat like Indian & coolies in the late British empire but I don't doubt whether the structure of American capitalism will make tribute from Europeans so acceptable..."(Childe to White Sept.18. 1948)

In the infamous chapter seven Childe reviews various theories of historical materialism and variants of Marxism. The type of literature review Childe undertook in this chapter, aside from its sources and topic, did not differ greatly from the previous six chapters in which he discussed various theories of historical order: supernaturalistic (theological and magical), and naturalistic (geographical, biological or racist, economic and scientific

ic, materialist). Childe freely quotes Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin frequently illustrating his detailed knowledge of their works and his agreements with them as to the nature of the historical process. While most scholars, particularly those in the West, acknowledged Stalin as a source material for Marxism, Childe seemed to respect not only his writings but his role as a politician. In fact, Childe concluded History with an oblique reference to Stalin:

"Scientific history makes no claim to be a sort of astrology to predict the outcome of a particular race or an individual battle for the profit of sportive or militaristic speculators. Its study, on the other hand, will enable the sober citizen to discern the pattern the process has been weaving in the past and therefrom to estimate how it may be continued in the immediate future. One great statesman of today has successfully foreseen the course of world history and him we have just quoted as an exponent of Marxist historiography..." (Childe 1947:83)

The final paragraph of Childe's work is hardly inflammatory. However, given the climate of the Cold War, many men saw their careers ended for less. Without fail, every reviewer of History noted Childe's final sentence in which he referred to Stalin but none explained why it was significant.⁶ Despite his optimistic reference to Stalin, unlike many of his Marxist contemporaries, Childe was ambivalent about how well historical materialism could predict the future course of world history (Marxists of this era maintained that they were able to foresee the resolution of the inherent contradictions in the historical process). According to the laws of dialectical materialism espoused by Stalin, world communism was the inevitable outcome of the historical process

(Stalin 1941).

In spite of Childe's reservations about the predictive value of dialectical materialism, he refused to publicly criticize Soviet Marxists. Indeed, he largely ignored dialectical laws. What distinguished Childe's work in History was his focus on the creative unpredictable quality of reality which negated the possibility of predictive historical laws. For Childe, if reality was totally creative and constantly bringing forth new inventions then no existing laws could encompass these emerging factors. It was Childe's adherence to this philosophical belief which separated him from other Marxists, a point no one seemed to recognize. Archaeology's potential contribution to historical knowledge was significant:

"Now if history be not following a prescribed route but is making its path as it proceeds, the search for a terminus is naturally vain. But a knowledge of the course already traversed is a useful guide to the probable direction of the next stage of the way..."
(Childe 1947:68)

The Journal Past and Present

After the demise of the book series Past and Present, a journal under the same title was founded under the direction of John Morris in 1952. The journal Past and Present, was designed as a historically oriented review in which both Marxists and non-Marxists could collaborate on the basis of a common concern about the state of historical research. The founding of the

journal was an attempt on the part of its editorial board to build a bridge between the increasingly acrimonious division of Marxist and non-Marxist scholars. In constructing that bridge, scholars such as Childe on the Left and those on the Right who recognized the importance of Marxist analyses, were attempting to revive in the postwar period the policies of broad unity that had characterized the prewar antifascist movement.⁷

1952 was hardly an auspicious time to start a journal such as Past and Present.⁸ The Cold War was at its peak, and the public was suspicious and fearful of anything and anyone tangentially associated with the Left. Nonetheless, there was an overwhelming need for such a publication, as Marxist scholars were working in almost total isolation. Of central importance to Morris and the others on the original editorial board was to maintain a Marxist majority. According to Hill, Hilton and Hobsbawm (1980), the original editorial board consisted of John Morris as editor, Eric Hobsbawm as assistant editor, and Geoffrey Barraclough, R.R. Betts, Gordon Childe, Maurice Dobb, Christopher Hill, Rodney Hilton, A.H.M. Jones, and D.B. Quinn as participating members.

Past and Present was designed to cover all history and when originally published carried the subtitle A Journal of Scientific History. The journal aimed to blur the line between the then small number of Marxist scholars and non-Marxists scholars, who were then in the majority, so it could attract a potentially large audience who had a common approach to history. Clearly,

this is in keeping with Childe's career long attempt to reach as wide an audience as possible and his belief that archaeology was not an arcane subject irrelevant to contemporary social issues. The original board members were all committed to the cause of making the journal acceptable to those on both the political Left and Right. Max Mallowan recalled, "there were times [Childe] felt profoundly depressed by the wide gulf which existed between the West and Russia. He regarded the international character of scholarship as of extraordinary importance in the bridging of that gulf" (Mallowan Institute of Archaeology Archive #58). Similarly, Gathercole has noted that during the Cold War:

"Left Wing intellectuals witnessed the slow disintegration of Russian prestige and a mounting attack by anti-Marxist critics on its philosophical roots. By 1950, when the Korean war broke out, the onslaught had reached massive proportions. Marxist intellectuals were often victimized or treated with contempt, and they were prone to respond [with] equally dogmatic behaviour. Russian, Chinese and Eastern European scholars worked in almost complete isolation... In the archaeological field, Childe found himself almost alone as a bridge between two mutually suspicious camps. While this emphasized his personal isolation, it also made him particularly sensitive to changes in the intellectual atmosphere..." (Gathercole 1974:7-8)

Although today Past and Present is one of the leading journals of historical studies, at its inception it was a suspect journal. In fact, all board members suffered from political or personal attack for their participation. All the original board members, with perhaps the sole exception of Childe, put themselves and their careers in jeopardy. Christopher Hill told me of one eminent scholar with personal experience of political dis-

crimination who postponed his first contribution to Past and Present until it no longer carried the communist stigma. Hill recalled another board member, Rudolph Wittkower, a German refugee, who was so bullied by his institution that he eventually resigned from the board. The first years the journal was in existence, Hill claimed "the main problem was getting articles and finding people who were prepared in those days to stick their necks out" (Interview with Author). The Red specter haunted not only current and potential board members and contributors but subscribers as well. For several years the Institute of Historical Research in London resisted all appeals to carry the journal (Hill, Hilton, Hobsbawm 1983:8).

Past and Present owes a great debt to Childe in particular and more generally to non-Marxist scholars, who by being associated with the journal could have easily been accused of lending respectability to the "Red Menace". Childe was undoubtedly the most important board member because he was the most renowned scholar in both Marxist and non-Marxist circles. By 1950 he was firmly established as Europe's leading prehistorian, and his reputation was beyond reproach.⁹ Hobsbawm has written that:

"When the student generation of the 1930's, who provided the main stock of the Group [Historians' Group of the Communist Party], began to produce Marxist historians, a few relatively senior intellectuals were already Marxist, or beginning to draw closer to Marxism. Though none of them were historians by profession, like all Marxists they were drawn to history and contributed to it. The most eminent, [was] the archaeologist and prehistorian V. Gordon Childe..."(Hobsbawm 1978:23)

Hill explicitly stated, "Childe's presence was a great thing

for us [the board] and cannot be overemphasized". I asked, for example, why someone like Bernhard Stern, editor of Science and Society, was not asked to be an advisor and Hill said:

"we didn't want that sort of chap in the early days, we wanted respectables, we already had plenty of Marxists, Gordon Childe was the best of both. He was not a dogmatist, he was sort of a prematurely liberated Marxist..."(Interview with Author)

Elsewhere Hill wrote about Childe that his eminence:

"is recognized even by those who deplore the Marxism of his later years. Professor Childe is no dogmatic Marxist who has approached history with a series of preconceived shibboleths; he is the perfect example of a really honest scientist driven to Marxism in full maturity of his creative work because the Marxist approach helped him to formulate and solve historical problems more effectively..." (Hill 1949:259)

Between 1952 and 1957 Childe worked as hard as anyone else on the editorial board. During this period approximately two-thirds of the contents of Past and Present was written by Marxists (Hill, Hilton, and Hobsbawm 1983). The journal rapidly established itself as the most vibrant historical journal in Britain, but it continued to be regarded, if not as Marxist, then at least one under Marxist or communist domination. According to Hill, Hilton, and Hobsbawm (1983), the debates surrounding the drafting of the journal's inaugural Introduction were acrimonious at times. The Introduction was eventually drafted jointly by Hobsbawm, Geoffrey Barraclough and John Morris. The Introduction was written so that it could not be considered a mere euphemistic reformulation of Marxism, yet at the same time it had to be phrased in such a manner as to be acceptable to both Marxists and non-Marxists.

"On the positive side it stressed history as the history 'of the transformation which society undergoes by its very nature', and this may have given Past and Present that lasting bent towards social history which was not attracting much attention in the early 1950's. On the negative side it declared its opposition both to the reduction of history to the natural or social sciences and, at the opposite extreme, to historical irrationalism and the denial of the capacity of history to generalize..."(Hill, Hilton, Hobsbawm 1983:6)

Those who were on the Left during the Cold War, particularly those who were on the editorial board of Past and Present, felt they had a moral responsibility to be as provocative as possible yet subtle enough to get a Marxist viewpoint across. In this context, I asked Hill whether Childe as well as other Marxists were "sugarcoating" their Marxism. In response Hill said:

"I suppose the entire exercise in the founding of Past and Present was in a way a process of sugarcoating. It was Marxists collaborating with non-Marxists, but the Marxists were sugarcoating their Marxism in order to make their collaboration work. No one, I'm sure, explicitly discussed or announced that 'I'm going to sugarcoat my Marxism now'. It was a conscience decision made in private. For some it was a profound decision, but by and large, given the times, it was simply a matter of common sense..."(Interview with Author)

Given the purpose behind the creation of Past and Present, it becomes clear that Childe was not at all unusual in veiling his Marxism. This often consisted of merely changing one's vocabulary, in Childe's case throughout the late 1940s and 1950s he began to refer less often to Marx than to Emile Durkheim, who was undoubtedly more acceptable to Childe's British colleagues. Childe referred to the dichotomy between his explicitly Marxist work and his work where his Marxism was not so obvious in a letter to Leslie White.

"in spite of the extreme reaction you & Stern & co. are managing to get across a lot of good Marxism... Here where the Party is formally unrestricted, it insists on publishing exclusively in what the bourgeoisie call 'Marxist jargon'. Many quite intelligent people are so repelled thereby that they never read any Marxism at all. I believe in sugarcoating as in the Hobhouse lecture. With my own **avowedly** Marxist work hardly anyone gets beyond the preface..."[emphasis in original] (Childe to White Jan.15,1950)

Cold War Dogma and Skewed Reviews

During the Cold War, Childe tried to make his Marxist beliefs more palatable so that his ideas would not be rejected outright. Therefore the dichotomy between his explicitly Marxist works and those where his use and knowledge of Marxism is less evident becomes more understandable. Even before the Cold War, Childe was sensitive to the implications of being identified as a Marxist, for he believed such a label was misleading. He wrote to R.P. Dutt in 1938 that he wanted "to get good Marxist ideas across to my colleagues and students and in that I have had some success, but they would not listen if I began as a Marxist" (Childe to Dutt Oct. 14, 1938). Throughout Childe's career, his commitment to Marxism was demonstrated both subtly and explicitly. To give but two examples, in The Story of Tools (1944), a pamphlet written for the Young Communist League, Childe's purpose was to demonstrate that the general ideas Engels had set forth in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State were confirmed by the archaeological record. In contrast, in Piecing

Together the Past (1956a), a study of archaeological method, explicit reference to Marxist theory are conspicuously absent.

While the attack on intellectual freedom in the United States reached hysterical proportions, in Britain the attack on the Left took on a sharper intellectual edge. In reviewing Byzantium in Europe by Jack Lindsay, an anonymous author in the Times Literary Supplement not only damned Lindsay's book but advocated a literal witchhunt within the historical profession. The anonymous author based his opinions on his own gross misrepresentations of Marxism (Anonymous 1952):

"Marxian historiography is fundamentally opposed to the canons of Western scholarship. 'Historical materialism' starts with certain presuppositions which are not merely working hypotheses, to be discarded if subsequently ascertained facts do not bear them out: on the contrary, they are immutable dogma, revealed truths to which the facts must be made to conform. This naturally makes nonsense of Western scientific methods; and it raises the question, which will have seriously to be faced, sooner rather than later, by those concerned with academic appointments, whether, in fairness to his pupils, any individual who adheres to the Communist doctrine can be allowed responsibility for the teaching of history..."(Anonymous 1952)

The anonymous reviewer's description fit the blatant Tory and imperialist propaganda masquerading itself as impartial history. This so called review prompted a number of letters of protest from Christopher Hill (1952), Lindsay (1952b), John Morris (1953) and Andrew Rothstein (1953b) (also see Hill 1953; Rothstein 1953b). Hill's angry response called for the Times Literary Supplement to deplore and rescind the suggestions made by the reviewer of Lindsay's book. Similarly Lindsay (1952b:853) was

appalled that the TLS would let itself be used in "gutterpress fashion in the service of the witch-hunt". Despite these letters of protest, the TLS did not condemn its anonymous reviewer, in fact they defended this review! A TLS editorial entitled "Freedom and Integrity" (January 2, 1953:9), maintained that within "Marxist philosophy" the "primary purpose of the teaching of history is the education of the proletariat for the role which it is destined to play in history". "Western scholarship", in contrast, is "based on the assumption that the sole object of research is the discovery of fact tested by evidence". The review concluded that:

"When a Marxist states his opinions are based on science, what he means is that they coincide with a doctrine which, in its origin, claimed to be founded on scientific observation... When a Marxist, addressing a western public, claims that Marxist history is scientific, he is using terms in a sense which in the West they do not possess. The essence of academic, as of commercial, honesty is the habit of presenting commodities under the right names. It is the business of teaching historians in the universities of Europe to teach the technique of historical research and thinking which is so essential a part of the culture over which they stand guard. To employ or retain in employment a teacher who, in practice as well as theory, repudiates that technique is a dereliction of duty. Men should not be persecuted for their opinions, but in so far as their opinions affect their competence their employers are under the bouden duty to take them into account...(Anonymous 1953:9)

As early as 1945, the effects of the anti-Marxist movement articulated in the Times Literary Supplement could be felt on American and British universities.¹⁰ In an editorial published by Modern Quarterly the editors reported that the head of one school in the University of London refused to support a candidate

of outstanding reputation for a post which he was eminently qualified on the grounds that he would not be party to "any further infiltration of Communists into university posts" (Modern Quarterly NS, 1950). Other such cases began to be reported with increasing frequency at other universities. Childe was not immune from the political atmosphere and wrote to O.G.S. Crawford that he "had better be careful about what I say and where I publish or I will never get out of Edinburgh" (Childe to Crawford May 3, 1946). Here Childe is referring to his then proposed move from the University of Edinburgh to the Directors's position at the Institute of Archaeology in London.

Despite the quietly oppressive nature of the Cold War in Britain, no scholars were fired from their posts, nor were public trials held, as happened in the States. Yet at various universities, teachers and writers were mobilized to spread the Marshall-Montgomery gospel and campaign against the Soviet Union and Marxist scholarship. Christopher Hill recalled that the most often used excuse or euphamism not to hire someone on the Left was to simply state that he or she was of the "wrong period":

"In a way the Cold War was not as bad here in England as in the States. People were not being denounced in that sort of McCarthy-ite way and there was not any sort of institutional persecution. But it was done in an English, gentlemanly way. At the time I called it a cold purge; people didn't lose their jobs, but nobody anywhere near the Left got a job. None of my pupils in the 50's got jobs, at least none of my Left wing students did. I had tenure; I held on and I was used to show how tolerant Oxford was that they had a Marxist among them. This was deliberately quoted to me. There was a very real black-balling, you see there was no need for a purge of any sort, for we just quietly excluded people. It was much more insidious and more

difficult to oppose, you could not go public..."(Interview with author)

In contrast to Hill, Benjamin Farrington's characterization of the Cold War expressed at the time was rather bitter. In a letter to Bernhard Stern Farrington wrote:

"I have been getting some idea from the press, from letters, and from visitors who have returned from the USA, of the kind of difficulties you are having to face under the witch hunt. It is a disaster that we in Britain have not done better. It may prove in the end that nothing short of reduction to poverty and impotence will shake the mind of the British worker out of his complacent reactionary mentality. There is as yet no effective mass revolt against imperialism, no feeling that we could save Greece, that we could save Viet Nam, that we could help China. Our foreign policy is a curse, and the expenditure in which it has evolved us is bringing us to ruin. The British people were admirable in war, now I feel about them the way I did when they let democracy be strangled in Spain. That was a truly disgusting time, and the same stink is rising again. But our cause has made great progress in the world in general even if we haven't..."(Farrington to Stern February 20, 1948)

Childe's correspondence with Leslie White clearly illustrates how acutely he felt the pressures of the Cold War and the decided unpopularity of his Marxist position. Childe was particularly impressed that White continued to correspond with him and added that it may be a "danger" for one of White's friends to visit him. Childe also humorously added that he thought "it would be very dangerous to correspond with even a very pale pink inhabitant of the American colony of England" (Childe to White July 2, 1954). Years later Childe recalled:

"Since means of production figure so conspicuously in the archaeological record, I suppose most prehistorians are inclined to be so far Marxists as to wish to assign them a determining role among the behaviour patterns that have fossilized. They can even do so in the U.S.A.

without invoking the Fifth Amendment...(Childe 1958:72)

In the United States, by the beginning of the 1950s appointing boards that would not have dreamed of inquiring whether a junior lecturer was a Democrat or Republican were now asking candidates point blank whether they were communists or members of the Communist Party. According to the editorials in publications such as Modern Quarterly in Britain and Masses and Mainstream in the United States academic referees, in sending their letters about an applicant's high qualifications, took it upon themselves to add that he or she was or was not a communist. A number of people I interviewed recalled that heads of university departments asked their colleagues to find out through informers whether a candidate was a member of the Communist Party.

Childe's activities as editorial council for the Marxist journal Modern Quarterly brought his attention to the pressure under which American scholars were working. Modern Quarterly, was devoted to the "realistic social reevaluation of the arts and sciences through a careful collaboration with European and American scholars". Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, the editorials in Modern Quarterly, were filled with reports of the "wave of persecution of progressive opinions" in the United States. To give but one example, Modern Quarterly devoted an entire editorial to the case of the novelist Howard Fast who was imprisoned during the Cold War (Modern Quarterly, V.7:121-122). According to the historian Ellen Schrecker, Fast experienced more academic ostracism than any of those charged with contempt stemming from

the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigation of a group to which he belonged (Schrecker 1986:91-93).¹¹ The same editorial referred to the "other America of Howard Larson, Eugene Dennis, Paul Robeson, Albert Maltz and Barrows Dunham". Modern Quarterly went on to praise "all those, and they are many, who have the courage to stand up to the political intimidation which would condemn them to silence" (Modern Quarterly V.7:122).

Cold War Climate Aborts United States Visit

Childe visited the United States on three separate occasions during the 1930s (1936,1937,1939). The importance of these three visits can not be overemphasized, for throughout the rest of his academic career Childe kept abreast of developments in American anthropology. Due to both logistical problems and the deepening of the Cold War, 1939 proved to be the last time Childe was to ever set foot in the United States. In Irving Rouse's obituary for Childe published in American Antiquity, Rouse (1958:83) maintained that in 1945, Childe was declared persona non grata by the United States State Department because of his espousal of Marxian theories. Rouse hints that the reason for the State department's supposed action was due to Childe's participation at the 220th Anniversary Celebration of the Soviet Academy of Sciences held in Leningrad and Moscow. Having filed a Freedom of Information Act on Childe, I have found no United States State Department records on the man exist. However, visa files for

those wishing to emigrate to or visit the States are closed for 75 years hence it is impossible to know definitively whether Childe did or did not apply for a visa.

In 1940 Childe entertained thoughts of visiting the States once again and, as already discussed, on his previous visits had deposited fairly large sums of money in U.S. Savings bonds. While the money was eventually transferred back to Childe in England, all international financial transactions of non-citizens required that the State Department be notified (they had to approve all international transfers). Undoubtedly, this is how the State Department became aware of Childe's existence. Just a few years earlier (1939) in a move to appease conservatives, President Roosevelt appointed Breckenridge Long, an admitted fascist, to head the visa division. Long held the post until 1944 and during his tenure at the State department there was a six year refusal to allow more than a handful of Jewish and Left-wing intellectuals into the United States (Cook 1989/90). None at all were allowed to enter Canada. Clearly, had Childe applied for a visa, it is highly unlikely that he would have been allowed to enter the United States.

The U.S.--Canadian ban was based on the grounds that the immigrants might be communists or communist sympathizers. This policy was upheld after Long's departure and during the Cold War the exclusion of foreign scholars went so far as to have some visitors "detained" upon their arrival by State Department officials and refused entry into the country. Two of Childe's contem-

poraries, Christopher Hawkes and Stuart Piggott, each recalled that they were routinely required to be interviewed for a visa prior to visiting the United States during the 1940s. Hawkes recalled that he was shown an amazingly long list of "subversive organizations" and asked if he belonged to any of them. Hawkes joked that "Childe probably helped found or at least supported half of them" (Interview with author). Based on their experiences, both Hawkes and Piggott each believed Childe would never have been allowed into the States.

Robert Braidwood, William Duncan Strong, and Leslie White each tried on several occasions to get Childe to come to the United States after World War II as a visiting scholar. In 1948 Strong and White made a concerted effort to get Childe to come the States by formally inviting Childe to teach at Columbia University during the Spring of 1949 and at the University of Michigan in the Fall of 1949-50 (White to Childe July 10, 1948). Citing the increasing tensions of the Cold War, Childe wrote to Leslie White that:

"In general, I should enormously welcome the opportunity of coming to [the] U.S.A. and renewing personal contact with all my friends and colleagues there, and also do some teaching in American Universities, for I find it very stimulating to lecture to American Students. On the other hand, I must say that I feel very doubtful whether, under the present regime of anti-communist hysteria (though I am not a member of the party) I should be granted a visa, and, even if I were, whether I might not find myself suddenly kidnaped by some official, or unofficial, body..."(Childe to White September 8, 1948)

In comparison to the way he would later write to Strong, White's response to Childe's letter is rather muted and reserved.

By this I mean White was less than forthcoming with Childe in discussing the possible political repercussions of his proposed visit. This is particularly curious as White was a member of the Socialist Labor Party and his work published in the party paper was written under the pseudonym John Steel. Despite this, White wrote to Childe that:

"It is difficult to evaluate the significance of the anti-communistic propaganda, or hysteria, that is going on in the U.S. today. Many physicists are complaining loudly over the inquisitorial and smear tactics of certain congressional committees. And I have heard of professors being dismissed for supporting the campaign of Henry Wallace...(White to Childe Sept. 25, 1948)

Childe's concerns about being placed under surveillance, coupled with White's own fears of political persecution suggest how serious their concern was about the current political situation.¹² Childe had the misfortune of being invited to the States in an election year in which the Truman administration wanted to prove how strong its devotion was to the anti-communist cause. The Henry Wallace White referred to was a former vice president who had broken with the administration over its hard line policy toward the Soviet Union. Since the Communist Party supported Wallace it was easy for Truman and his allies to accuse Wallace of being its tool. Such attacks diverted attention from Truman's alleged "softness on Communism" and by identifying Wallace's critique of the Cold War with the Communist Party, they (McCarthy's followers) thereby eliminated all effective political opposition. While this was probably not what was intended, the concomitant result was that the McCarthyites were able to narrow

their red-baiting and excommunicate the Left.

Strong also recognized the difficulties associated with getting someone like Childe who was closely associated with the Left into the States during the Cold War. Strong wrote to White that "it was a shame that political difficulties should prevent our getting such a man. It seems to me unfair to try to urge him to come for as we know he is right in his forebodings. At best it could be embarrassing for him and at worst dangerous" (Strong to White October 13, 1948). White was much more candid with Strong regarding the political tensions and the reasons why Childe would not be able to get a visa. Just one week before writing to Childe, White wrote to Strong that:

"Childe's allusion to his interest in Marxism, etc. is interesting and puts a somewhat new complexion upon the proposed plan. I knew, of course, that Childe is and has been much interested in the theory of social evolution developed by Marx, Engels, and others, but I had never thought of him as one with active political interests--and he may have none. In a little volume, History, published by the Cobbett Press in England in 1947, Childe concludes his discussion of theories of historical interpretation with quotations from Marx, Lenin, and Stalin. There is an approving reference to "a great statesman of today" who has understood the course of history at the very end of the book that must, it seems, refer to Stalin. Certainly many a man in the U.S. has been called--or smeared--a communist on much less..."(White to Strong Sept. 19, 1948"

Barely a month later White would be even more pessimistic in his tone and more open about the "difficulties" and possible repercussions of Childe's proposed visit. According to White, these so called difficulties included the facts that "Childe undoubtedly would not be able to obtain a visa owing to the

correspondence of some of his views with those of Stalin et al.". Secondly White was "told that our administration [University of Michigan] would not want him under these circumstances" (White to Strong October 12, 1948). White wrote another short letter to Strong the following day marked "confidential" in which he stated that "even though Childe is a good man I would hate to be hurt by his visit for I do not want our department investigated by some committee of the legislature for political purposes" (White to Strong October 13, 1948).¹³

By the summer of 1948 the Truman administration was fully behind the anti-communist band wagon and under the Smith Act sought to prosecute top leaders of the American Communist Party. In so doing it was possible to put not only the party's ideology on trial but show how communist theory, as contained in the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin were dangerous to the American way of life. Anyone associated with the Left was open to attack and to be explicitly tied to the works of any communist theoretician could prove to be the end of one's career.

Conclusion

As early as 1940, the effects of the anti-communist movement could be felt at most British and American Universities. In fact in less than a decade British and American universities had completely redrawn the boundaries academic of freedom. The Cold War affected virtually every facet of life, and, whereas, one would have hoped the academic community would have fought such an

attack on intellectual and personal freedom, according to Schrecker:

"Failure to protect academic freedom eroded the academy's moral integrity. Professors and administrators ignored the stated ideals of their calling and overrode the civil liberties of their colleagues and employees in the service of such supposedly higher values as institutional loyalty and national security... The academy did not fight McCarthyism. It contributed to it. The dismissals, the blacklists, and above all the almost universal acceptance of the legitimacy of what congressional committees and other official investigators were doing conferred respectability upon the most repressive elements of the anti-communist crusade. In its collaboration with McCarthyism, the academic community behaved just like every other institution in American life..." (Schrecker 1986:340)

The impact this era had on anthropologists and archaeologists is not well understood. It is certainly not true that they escaped this era of political repression unscathed, as Bernhard Stern, Melville Jacobs, and Gene Weltfish, to name but three American anthropologists, ran afoul of investigating committees. By and large however, most scholars were affected in less visible but in an equally important manner. In Childe's case, I have demonstrated that simply his allusion to Stalin in his book History (1947) had grave consequences. To his credit, however, Childe did not retreat from his political beliefs but rather vigorously fought to have his ideas read by as wide an audience as possible.

The legacy scholars such as Childe have left is difficult to unravel and truly appreciate without paying particular attention to the larger sociopolitical atmosphere. In the post World War II era scholars began to increasingly rely on an essentially encoded

language to refer to Marxist concepts. In the writings of most academic Leftists there was a concerted attempt to make Marxist discourse more palatable to their non-Marxist colleagues. This trend has resulted in confusion for the decedents of that generation about how to interpret the writings of people such Childe. As Joan Vincent has noted, many graduate students have unsuccessfully pondered Steward's "levels of sociocultural integration" and its relationship to Marxist scholarship (Vincent 1955:141)¹⁴ To this end, my analysis of Childe's work during this dark era in American history has shed light on not just his work but the relationship between a scholars output, political activism, and the degree to which the broader sociopolitical climate affected it.

Notes

1. It may be over stated that the series was black listed in the strictest definition of the term, however, there is no doubt that Childe's citation of Leftist works, in particular Stalin, affected publishers willingness to publish the series.
2. The Smith Act was passed in 1940 under the sponsorship of Howard W. Smith (Democrat from Virginia) and was the first sedition act in almost a century and a half. In 1948, an election year in which Truman needed to prove to the GOP he was sensitive to national security, the FBI recommended that the Communist leadership be prosecuted under the Smith Act to establish the constitution basis for its future use. Invoked against eleven leaders of the Communist Party, the Act made it illegal to "teach and advocate the overthrow and destruction of the Government of the United States by force and violence". Since not enough Communists could be found who advocated the overthrow of the constitution by force, the Smith Act made the intent behind words treasonable as well.
3. While Schuman Books would go on to become a rather large publishing house, in 1953 he was simply trying to establish himself. In fact, according to Stern Schuman's business existed entirely on paper" (Stern to Farrington Sept. 1, 1953)
- 4, The same pumpkin patch that yielded the secret papers which led to Hiss's conviction was, under the Reagan administration, designated a National Historic Landmark.
5. I should note here that archaeological data did not fit into the arguments Childe made in his book. Indeed, nowhere in the

book can one find an explicit statement that the Marxist method necessarily provides the key to the understanding of archaeological data and a detailed demonstration from the empirical evidence that this was so.

6. Conservative reviewers in Britain seemed to delight in remarking that Stalin failed to foresee the invasion of Russia in 1941.

7. According to Hobsbawm(1978), there was not a long tradition of history in Britain. He credits the Historians' Group of the Communist Party as playing a major part in the development of Marxist historiography in Britain. While some have taken exception to this (see Sammual 1980 and Kaye 1984), there is no doubt that between 1946 and 1956 a vibrant Marxist historical tradition was established. During this era, scholars such as Maurice Dobb, Christopher Hill, Rodney Hilton, Eric Hobsbawm, Victor Kiernan, A.L. Morton, John Saville, Dorothy Thompson, and E.P. Thompson were all active members of the group. Influential to these people was a small cadre of older established scholars such as Childe, Benjamin Farrington, Dana Torr, and George Thomsen. Organized immediately after World War II, all these scholars were greatly affected by the Depression and they sought to popularize the study of history.

8. A parallel can be drawn between the establishment of Past and Present and Masses and Mainstream founded in 1948. Although the latter American journal was openly Marxist, it continued to be published throughout the Cold War only to cease publication in 1962.

9. Of those on the original editorial board, Childe was the only well established scholar working in an influential university setting. While all the board members would go on to have outstanding academic careers, in 1952 all were too young to be in places or positions where they could exert a powerful influence.

10. A controversy similar to that in the Times Literary Supplement over the ability of communists to teach history took place in the Universities Review (See Burston 1951)

11. Fast (1990) has recently published an autobiography in which he describes his experiences during the Cold War. Other personal accounts of political persecution during the Cold War can be found in Schutz and Schultz It Happened Here (1990).

12. Samuel Sillen (1949) wrote that "enough professors were driven off the American campus last year to form a new University-in-Exile". Among those fired, Sillen listed no less than twelve prominent scholars (Sillen 1949:7-8). Those singled out and fired for supporting the Wallace campaign included Leonard Coen, Jr., Charles Davis and Daniel Ashkenas of the University of Miami, Luther McNair, Dean of Lyndon State Teachers College, Clyde Miller of Teachers' College, Columbia University, and Don West of Oglethorpe College in Georgia (Sillen 1949).

13. After Strong and White gave up all hopes of getting Childe into the States they subsequently invited Childe's friend Daryll Forde. Forde visited the United States in Childe's place in 1948/1950 academic year and it would seem quite likely that White and Strong told Forde about the difficulties Childe's aborted

trip presented. Toward the end of Forde's 1948 Presidential Address in which he called for a link between anthropological studies carried out in Britain and the States he came to a spirited defense of Childe (Vincent 1990:274-275) has made the same point).

14. Hakken and Lessinger (1987) have made the same point.

Chapter 7

The Importance of Childe's Career in the History of Archaeology

Introduction

During the course of his career Childe took archaeology from being nothing more than an antiquarian activity of the upper class to a professional discipline. Yet in 1957, the year Childe ended his own life, it was clear that archaeology was beginning to head in a completely new direction. In addition, he came to the realization that Australian socialism and the establishment of an indigenous Australian intelligentsia was far from becoming a reality. As his suicide note published in Antiquity in 1980 demonstrates, his decision to end his own life was a cold but ultimately rational act of someone who no longer had the energy to begin his studies anew.

Perhaps nothing symbolizes the relationship Childe shared, or perhaps more accurately did not share, with his colleagues better than the circumstances surrounding his death. Always a maverick and independent thinker, in the end Childe was misunderstood by friends and foes alike. When his body was found at the bottom of a cliff in New South Wales many of his closest friends, archaeological peers, and Marxist associates did not believe he committed suicide.¹ Marxists argued he was not driven to suicide by the woeful state of Australian socialism, or by Krushchev's revelations about Stalin, or even the brutal crushing of the Hungarian rebellion. Archaeologists could not believe he would commit suicide simply because it was clear newly calibrated radiocarbon dates were going to invalidate his interpretation of prehistory.

Given the degree to which Childe was misunderstood, it can be persuasively argued that he was the quintessential outsider: whether the ideas he put forth were fashionable or at odds with the times. As an outsider, he was unwilling to be a member of any political party. If his ideas happened to coincide with the Socialist, Fabian, or Communist Parties was of no relevance to him. He was truly an iconoclast whose divergent approach to academics, politics, and the way in which he lived his own life became increasingly complicated as he grew older.

Despite the fact Childe did not associate himself with any one political party, he was constantly embroiled in some sort of activity that directly or at least tangentially involved politics. Throughout his career, and with varying degrees of success, he tried to fuse his intellectual efforts with his political beliefs. The concomitant result was that he was periodically embraced and damned by divergent political forces and parties thereby making him particularly sensitive to the often turbulent political climate. For example, he was prominent member of the Association of Scientific Workers, he was on the editorial board of the journal Modern Monthly, which later became the Marxist Quarterly. He was also on the founding editorial board of both the series of books Past and Present and the influential journal under the same title. He championed international scholarly contacts, including those in the Soviet Union via the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. He tried and succeeded in making archaeology a popular and relevant subject by publishing

synthesis such as Man Makes Himself, What Happened in History, and Social Evolution through untraditional outlets such as the Thinkers Library and the Library of Science and Culture.

In spite of his close relationship with the Left, Childe was blasted his colleagues because he did not faithfully follow party doctrines. His more zealous associates believed he did not have the intestinal fortitude to devote himself to Leftist causes. They also felt he failed to correctly interpret the works of Marx properly, or did not adequately discuss the role of class in history. Similarly, Soviet scholars found Childe's inability to follow party doctrine, particularly as it related to the concept of class, infuriating. Although he was described by Alexander Mongait as the greatest Western archaeologist, he was accused of having failed to overcome the limits of bourgeois science.

Like those on the Left, his more conservative archaeological colleagues found much wrong with his politics. For example, they believed his mission behind the Iron Curtain to bring back the fruits of Soviet and Eastern European archaeological scholarship was distasteful. They felt he was being used by a country with a distinctly foreign and dangerous political philosophy. They viewed such materials as propaganda, not true scholarship, and felt Childe allowed his political views to cloud his professional judgment. In short, to use the words of Glyn Daniel, they felt he was "intellectually dishonest" (Daniel 1986:401).

By analyzing not just Childe's published work but his activities in radical politics, one is able to grasp the true aim and

intention of his efforts. For instance, during the Cold War his critics failed to realize that Childe was "sugarcoating" his views so that they would not be rejected outright. Such "sugarcoating" was not intended to win him friends but rather spread the word that archaeology and history were relevant and important avenues of research that could shed light on contemporary problems. This was also a conscious decision which was dictated by the chilly climate of the Cold War. Certainly his role in the creation of the journal Past and Present reflects a concrete attempt on his part to get his Marxist ideas read by as wide an audience as possible. Always sensitive to being identified with any one particular school of thought he felt compelled to shake off any sectarian label whether it be conservative or radical and in the end was roundly criticized and misunderstood by one and all.

Political Activism and Persecution

From an early age Childe was committed to socialism. The first evidence of Childe's interest in radical politics emerged after his graduation from the University of Sydney in 1914 and before his departure for Oxford later that same year. It was during his tenure at Queen's College (1914-1917), however, that concrete and compelling evidence comes to the forefront regarding his commitment to the Left. While other scholars interested in Childe's early career have focused on the importance of his

archaeological mentors, I argue that Childe's political activities in radical organizations such as the Oxford University Socialist's Society were of far more significance in his intellectual development.

The internal political turmoil brought about by World War I occupied the lion's share of Childe's time and attention between 1914 and 1927. He was a tireless visible force in British anti-war protests and although this would seem far removed from archaeology, his preoccupation would have a lasting influence on the unfolding of his scholarship. Between Childe's departure for Oxford in 1914 and his accedence to the Abercromby Chair of Prehistoric archaeology at Edinburgh University in 1927, three particular activities dominated Childe's politics and are worthy of central consideration in any treatment of his intellectual development: first, his activities in the anti-conscriptionist movement; second, his persecution and blacklisting at the hands of the Australian Department of Defense and the University of Sydney; third, his involvement with Australian labor politics.

Childe was virtually the only Left-wing student at Oxford who was not expelled or arrested during the war. But this was not for the lack of desire on the part of Oxford authorities who were aghast at Childe's leadership in the anti-conscriptionist movement. The brutal treatment of those arrested for their opposition to the war had to have had a tremendous impact on Childe. His respectful letters to Gilbert Murray illustrate his deep concern for the physical safety of his friends who were arrested and

tortured in military prisons. Widespread arrests of those who were simply associated with the anti-conscriptionist movement made Childe aware of the high personal cost that could be extracted for involvement with radical political parties.²

Childe escaped political persecution in England during the war only because he was not a citizen and was thus exempt from the Military Service Act. However, his turn for persecution came when he returned home. The letter he wrote to the Australian High Commissioner discussed in chapter 2 which preceded his return to Australia in 1917 was used against him by the Australian Department of Defense. Like other Australian pacifists, Childe was placed under surveillance and was effectively barred from university appointment as the Department of Defense actively and effectively prevented Childe from obtaining any academic post.

Forced out of academia, Childe believed the university system was corrupt and that it needed to be rescued from the unscrupulous bigotry of academic leaders who conspired with Military Intelligence to keep him from being gainfully employed. This point was brought forth forcefully when his dismissal from the University of Sydney was brought up not once but twice in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. Childe's friend, T.J. Smith, pointed out that Childe's academic standing was without a blemish and he was clearly qualified for the post in question. In the ensuing discussion the Minister of Public Education used a technical point to avoid admitting that politics were at the heart of Childe's dismissal. Childe's chances for academic employment in

Australia effectively ended there. This was a bitter pill to swallow for Childe who turned to "political agitation" as the only occupation in which he could get paid.

With no hope of landing a job in Australia within the field he was trained, Childe became deeply involved in the local anti-conscriptionist movement. He joined the Australian Union of Democratic Control (AUDC), participated in the Third Inter-State Peace Conference and opposed what he saw as attacks on the civil liberties by the Hughs government. Between 1917 and 1922 Childe found himself aligned with the Australian Labour Party and began to take on a more active role in party politics.³ He would go on to become the Private Secretary of John Storey, the Labour Premier, but his tenure came to an abrupt and immediate end with the elections of 1922. He was fired from his job by the incoming Conservative Party on the grounds that his position was an unnecessary duplication. Obviously, the incoming Conservative Party wanted nothing to do with Childe and found his placement an embarrassment and used this as an excuse to dispatch him as hastily as possible.

The Political Context of Childe's Archaeology

After being fired from his job in 1922 Childe's career options were rather limited. Essentially, he faced a choice between a career as an expatriate radical politician or an academician. While superficially Childe's shift from Australian politics to

archaeology and the study of European prehistory may appear odd, it was entirely consistent with his socialism. For his interest in the role intellectuals played in the evolution of society remained intact. Instead of looking for the way in which intellectuals could assist the transition to a socialist government in Australia, when studying prehistory he was attempting to understand in historic terms why European civilization was the bastion of rational and scientific thought yet at the same time the embodiment of enslavement, persecution and inhumanity.

It is important to note here that before Childe wrote his first archaeological text, The Dawn of European Civilization, prehistoric studies was little more than an antiquarian stamp-collecting exercise for the wealthy with only a tenuous component of theory to explain the process of cultural development. Childe changed all that virtually overnight. With the publication of his first five books--The Dawn, (1925) The Aryans (1926), The Most Ancient East (1928), The Danube in Prehistory (1929), and The Bronze Age (1930)--Childe replaced outmoded nineteenth century archaeology. Taken together, these works represent Childe's attempt to develop a method of organizing raw archaeological data. Found within the pages of these texts are numerous methodological tools considered common today: the idea that objects associated in a context such as a house or a grave were contemporary, that long cultural sequences could be built up by observing stratigraphical successions of associated groups, that synchronisms between different sequences could be established by identi-

fyng links between them, and that absolute dates could be provided by linking sequences ultimately to one with firm historic dates.

While Childe never explicitly discussed these concepts until later in his career, he single handedly gave the discipline an entirely new approach. To borrow the title of one of his last books, Childe's view of archaeology was always more than simply "piecing together the past", it was a means of finding answers to some of the most profound questions about the history of human societies. Until now scholars interested in the early part of Childe's career as a professional archaeologist have focused solely on his chronological synthesis of Europe. Their approach has failed to realize the significance and broader scope of Childe's thought. My contextualization of Childe's career in the broader sociopolitical era in which he lived reveals Childe's life and work is particularly critical because he was both a seminal figure in the professionalization of prehistoric studies and well attuned to contemporary politics. In the end, however, one must naturally ask what did Childe actually accomplish with the publication of twenty-two books and the hundreds of articles? Above all else, he successfully integrated the best material and theoretical resources that were available to him when he was working. Like most people, he made many errors during his career, and in his own estimation, he never accomplished an entirely satisfactory synthesis of European prehistory. Despite this, his contributions to the study of man's past was great and can be

generally summarized within five points:

First, he produced the first integrated account of the archaeological record of prehistoric Europe in which all the evidence of man's past fit. In so doing, he bridged the gap between British and European scholarship. For example, he took the nationalistic theories of Kossinna without their excesses and political programmes and incorporated it into a unique interpretation of the archaeological record.

Second, he did for the Near East what he had done for prehistoric Europe, that is to say he produced an integrated account of Near Eastern prehistory.

Third, he converted what had heretofore been an account of successive types of material culture into a series of economic models. Specifically his introduction of the concepts of the Neolithic and Urban revolutions which indicated the importance of environmental changes, demographic factors, technological innovations and how they affected the social structure of society.

Fourth, he outlined how archaeological evidence should be integrated in a comprehensive historical picture of the past in which the evidence and the way in which it is presented is of critical importance. Here Childe emphasized historians have always been associated with the ruling class and that their accounts perpetuate the propaganda of the elites.

Fifth, he left the discipline with a wealth of methodological advances for interpreting the archaeological record

which are now common place.

The above points provide an inadequate summary of the richness of Childe's contribution to prehistory, yet they illustrate how practical his concerns were. For Childe the acquisition of food and the manufacture of tools to facilitate human survival were the keystones in the establishment of civilization as we know it. But these artifacts were also the very real testimony to human endeavors that changed the world. I would argue that this emphasis could be related to Marx's influence.⁴ As a social thinker, Marx absorbed social evolutionary theory into his philosophical and economic model of history but he was not overly concerned with the periodization of prehistory. Instead, he established a materialistic science of society from which he defined a series of "progressive epochs of the socioeconomic order". Thus Marx more than any other early scholar was interested in the broad outline of a materialistically based conception of history designed to show not only how history had changed in the past but how it would change in the future. Given this, the prehistoric artifacts described by Childe in excruciating detail can be seen as being part of that material record and a demonstration that man did indeed progress through "Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production". It also allowed Childe to continue to hope and even help society progress to the next stage of human development--socialism.

Childe used this insight quite subtly in the first part of his career in which he worked so hard to establish a reasonable

and logical framework in which all the evidence for the prehistory of Europe could be accommodated. Clearly Childe felt he could not scientifically explain the socioeconomic forms of society until the detailed minutiae of archaeology formed a coherent narrative. Though he never expressed it in explicit terms, Childe assembled his data in terms of two models; one was largely descriptive and classificatory, perfectly suited for the archaeological record, and the second, economic, which sought to analyze the society under question so that one could infer the general characteristics of its sociopolitical institutions. In short, for Childe the archaeological interpretation of data such as tools, pots, beads, tombs, or any other artifact demanded a more subjective level of archaeological investigation.

It was not until 1930 that Childe felt the archaeological record was sufficiently well grounded that he could (a) separate the concept of a prehistoric culture from a technological stage of development thereby treating it as a short hand for the functioning community which produced a material culture and (b) transform these same technological stages (e.g. neolithic, bronze age etc.) into societal consequences of major changes in European and Near Eastern socioeconomic organization. In so doing, Childe incorporated diverse theoretical concepts ranging from the concept of culture derived from Gustav Kossinna to functionalism taken from then contemporary British social anthropology to establish his own unique contribution to method and theory in archaeology.

As I have already shown, the publication of The Bronze Age (1930) heralded a major transition in Childe's thinking. Here, Childe emphasized the importance of regular trade, particularly in copper, in allowing for the emergence of class specialists. For Childe, this demarcated the first steps toward a division of labour. Accordingly, he wrote in his notes:

"Whoever had the perseverance to earn initiation into the appropriate mysteries of technique and the courage to face the enormous risks and severe hardships involved, could escape the necessity of growing his own food and shake off the bonds of allegiance to an overlord or the more rigid fetters of tribal custom..." (Institute of Archaeology Archive)

In describing the sociopolitical climate of Europe as being composed of independent warring units he saw the first craftsmen-scientists-philosophers as "the metics at Athens, the wayfaring journeymen of the Middle Ages, and the migrant craft unionists of the nineteenth century as the lineal descendants of the itinerants just described" (Institute of Archaeology Archive). Committed to an economic interpretation of archaeological data, Childe looked at the prehistory of European society in a new light, and hence he rewrote and retitled The Most Ancient East (1928) to New Light on the Most Ancient East (1934). In the former work Childe found it helpful to use the concept of revolutions to explain the sudden development of heretofore unknown technological developments that were equivalent to the Industrial revolution.⁵ For Childe, prehistoric Europe neolithic and bronze age cultures respectively were shaped by the transition from food collecting to food producing and from self-sufficient food

producing villages to urban societies. Although Childe maintained the traditional classification used by his fellow archaeologists, he argued they were indicative of real revolutions that affected all departments of life. Childe thus was beginning to breath some life into what were solely descriptive and classificatory mechanisms.

In presenting a materialistically based interpretation of prehistory, Childe felt he had established archaeology as a science on par with other disciplines such as biology and physics. This was in keeping with the dictum written by Lord Abercromby for the Chair of Archaeology named in his honor. It also brought Childe into contact with other scientists such as J.D. Bernal, J.G. Crowther, and J.B.S. Haldane who participated in the dining club Tots and Quots organized by Solly Zuckerman as well as the 1931 Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology. As a result of his association with eminent scientists, and in particular the conference, Childe came to believe that archaeology and anthropology would one day be slotted into a 'science of history in much the same way that paleontology and botany could be placed within a science of biology.

Childe believed that conventional history was limited in evidence, scope and time. He felt it should be replaced by a historical understanding that joined the fields of prehistory and recorded history in which the importance of the material culture of preliterate cultures was recognized. By expanding the

modern historical vision to incorporate prehistory Childe sought to bring the study of archaeology closer to zoology, paleontology and geology. The questions he subsequently asked, such as why mankind went through periods of stagnancy and degeneracy, led him to investigate the technological accomplishments of prehistoric people and how they affected the development of society. Using an explicit evolutionary analogy, he believed human cultural modifications and the development of European civilization was called progress by archaeologists and evolution by scientists but were in fact one in the same process.

Clearly Childe's deductive approach to archaeology was more closely related to scientific theory than the descriptive approach of his fellow archaeologists. The reasons for this are simple.⁶ Childe was too keenly aware of the possible and real abuses of the archaeological record to become lost in the practical applications of the field. For example, Childe knew too well how in Nazi Germany the adoption of the dogma of National Socialism was responsible for the results of excavations, rather than simply demonstrating the correctness or incorrectness of the original theory. Childe was flatly opposed to any approach in archaeology where the logical relationship existing between an investigative technique to be applied to a hypothesis, and the prediction or negation of the outcome which was predicated by the hypothesis.

Childe's strong opposition to research driven by a political agenda rather than by scientific facts was not limited to cri-

tiques of Nazi theorists. Indeed, Childe eschewed anything which smacked of a crudely mechanistic explanation; for example, he continually pointed out that many Marxists in attempting historical syntheses confused determinants of historical processes with causes of processes. Childe was an independent thinker who believed all of mankind was mutually dependent upon one another. Childe's views on the diffusion of culture from the Orient, therefore, fluctuated more in relation to the sociopolitical climate than to the archaeological record. For example, early in his career he postulated that the European native contribution to the evolution of society was significant and came close to endorsing the views of Kossinna. In time he realized how this idea, particularly as it related to linguistic considerations of Indo-Europeans, could be abused by German theoreticians. This led him to, first, abandon his search for the origins of an Indo-European language, his original interest in prehistory and, second, to write The Dawn. Accordingly, I have argued in looking at the sociopolitical context one can not help but conclude that The Aryans, was written before The Dawn and abandoned because of its political implications.⁷

Clearly Childe felt archaeology could be used as a powerful analytic tool, one which could either promote the baseless scientific theories of fascism or combat this bastardization. This also accounts for why Childe was able to write dense and even abstruse archaeological monographs yet at the same time publish semi-popular books which reached a wide and enthusiastic audi-

ence. For on the one hand, he was contributing to the scientific foundation on which his generalizations were based, and on the other hand, was raising the consciousness of the educated layman.⁸ This style of working continued to suit him and his two best selling popular works, Man Makes Himself (1936), and its sequel, What Happened in History (1942), sold well over 300,000 copies between 1936 and 1945. Moreover, they subsequently went through a number of printings and were translated into dozens of different languages.⁹

Conclusion

Recently anthropologists and archaeologists have begun to move past what George Stocking and Bruce Trigger have labeled "Whiggish histories". Here I refer to Glyn Daniel's work on the history of British archaeology and Willey and Sabloff's work on the history of American archaeology (Daniel 1967, 1975, 1981: Willey and Sabloff 1974). Stocking and Trigger have further argued that historians of anthropology, and of the social sciences in general, must now be trained in at least two areas of specialization: first, they must be familiar with both contemporary anthropological theory and its history. Second, they must be familiar with the issues in the philosophy of the sciences and the epistemology of science. To this I would add attention needs to be focused on the sociopolitical context and its influence on the theoretician in question, for scholars and their theoretical

advances are undoubtedly influenced by a myriad of contemporary events which occupy their daily lives.

Two detailed studies have been published which highlight how rich the results of historically oriented treatise can be--specifically Stocking's Victorian Anthropology (1987) and Trigger's A History of Archaeological Thought (1990). Both these works contextualize their discussions of anthropological and archaeological theory in the broader cultural traditions in which anthropologists operated thereby incorporating economic, social, political and intellectual history. In addition, two edited volumes of contextual studies have been released which reveal how such disparate subjects such as Stonehenge studies, the archaeology of Chaco Canyon, the Ancient Monuments Protection Act, and the career of Augustus Le Plongeon can all benefit from a critical historiographic approach.¹⁰

Pinsky and Wylie have argued that although the history of archaeology and anthropology has made significant advances in the last decade, it must take another step forward. They believe if writing the history of the discipline is to have any relevance it must be able to add insight into current social theory. Pinsky and Wylie have accordingly concluded:

"a critical historiography must be grounded in the details of past history in as full a context as possible, archaeologists can and should investigate that history through their own contemporary historical lenses guided by their own theoretical commitments and questions. Writing history is neither a simple procedure of suspending judgment about the past, nor of imposing those theoretical commitments in such a way that they prevent an apprehension of the past. Rather, it is a continuous dialogue between past and present,

and present and future..." (Pinsky and Wylie 1989:91)

In asking whether the history of archaeology must be relevant to contemporary studies, one must ask, as Meltzer (1989) has done, what exactly is relevance? According to Meltzer, the answer is twofold: first, that archaeologists recognize that the study of a field's history is the best way of understanding its basic tenets; second, they recognize that the reasons we think and act as we do is generally based on what has come before us (Meltzer 1989:11). Because archaeologists do not work in an intellectual vacuum they are affected not only by their ancestors but by the sociopolitical climate in which they work. Interpretations of the archaeological record are made by men and women who are affected by a broad range of factors and they share a particular intellectual and cultural milieu which can not be recreated. Nevertheless, in exploring an issue such as the life of Vere Gordon Childe it is possible to grasp the ethos of a scholars work. Clearly, one can not make history come alive again but contributions such as Childe's can and should be understood in the context of its time. Hopefully, such contextualizations will enable archaeologists and anthropologists to understand not only their ancestors contribution to the field but their own as well.

Notes

1. It is interesting to note here that when I did my interviews I found that Childe confided his intent to commit suicide to those who were conservatively inclined while he seemed to keep this fact from his Marxist associates. Peter Gathercole has come closest to any other scholar in establishing why Childe committed suicide. He maintains that Childe's suicide note is a powerful rationalization of his profound and long lasting sense of loneliness. While he did have many friends, he never married, to the best of anyone's knowledge was not gay, and simply did not become intimately associated with a single individual throughout his life. Often misunderstood it is easy to portray Childe as a sort of tragic figure yet this too does not adequately resolve why he ended his own life.

2. Childe once told Dutt that he felt the price radical politics extracted was too great and that he preferred the "fleshpots of academia" (Dutt 1957b).

3. Childe's first book, How Labour Governs (1923), can be seen as a stinging critique of the repeated failure of labor governments and what has become known as labourism. Childe believed that intellectuals, working in conjunction with the working class through the coordination of industrial and political wings, could bring socialism to Australia. Yet based on his own first hand observations of in fighting and power struggles in the labor government he concluded that the parliamentary system was a creation of the upper classes, embodying their traditions and

privileges, and that once within it working class representatives would of necessity lose their allegiance to their own party and "rat" on their principles and fail to implement the programmes on which they were elected.

4. Marx may have also appealed to Childe because his own views shared a similar conversion with that of Marx, here I refer to the transition from a concern with Hegelian dialectics to industrial materialism. According to Golan, Childe was profoundly influenced by Francis Anderson at the University of Sydney when he was an undergraduate. Anderson was a well respected Hegelian scholar with whom Childe studied philosophy as an undergraduate. Dutt's reminiscences support this belief as he wrote that Childe's philosophical Marxism traveled the royal road through Hegel to Marxist materialism.

5. Childe defined a revolution as the culmination a progressive change in the economic structure and social organization of communities that causes, or was accompanied by, a dramatic increase in the population affected" (Childe 1936).

6. Childe had a distaste for treating archaeology as simply a materialistic inquiry that had no relevance to contemporary politics. Childe could not relegate prehistoric man to an altogether different category of phenomena. For during the 1930s British and American archaeologists were deeply involved in the minutiae of matters such as pollen analysis, the study of animal remains, the refinement of stratigraphical excavation techniques etc. and seemingly oblivious to larger sociopolitical events.

Indeed, one could argue this lack of concern could account for why Childe has been largely characterized as being a poor excavator by his archaeological peers. This is the subject of heated debate among British archaeologists. Based on my interviews with his former students and an examination of his field notebooks I would maintain he as at worst a competent field worker. The sites he worked, such as Skara Brae, presented major problems and I cannot help but conclude he felt it was an appropriate place to learn fieldwork techniques. In addition, Mortimer Wheeler was on the cutting edge of the discipline in the establishment of fieldwork techniques and sent most of his students to work with him.

7. Despite Childe's strongly held beliefs, this did not stop him from publishing The Aryans, thereby compromising his political beliefs. In later years this was a work he was deeply embarrassed by, and he sought its publication only after being turned down for a number of positions, including the Abercromby Chair of Prehistoric Archaeology. It is also interesting to note here that Renfrew's book Archaeology and Language has done much to rekindle interest in Childe's early work on the puzzle of Indo-European origins.

8. In the first edition of What Happened in History the final page reads "For the forces. Leave this book at a Post Office when you have read it, so that men and women in the services may enjoy it too."

9. The sales of Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History are truly astounding by today's standards. Between their original

publication dates and the end of the 1980s several million copies have been sold; in addition both books have remained in print continuously and been translated into over a dozen different languages.

10. Here I am referring to Tracing Archaeology's Past (Ed. Christenson) and Critical Traditions in Contemporary Archaeology (Ed. Pinsky and Wylie).

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Archives Utilized

The archives used in this study come from the United States, England and Australia. Below are a short descriptions of the sources I drew on and their location.

United States:

American Museum of Natural History
Department of Anthropology
79th Street at Central Park West
New York, New York 10024

1. Letters between Childe and Clark Wissler. The letters concern the 1939 Worlds Fair and the manner in which Scottish archaeology was to be represented.

American Philosophical Society
105 South Fifth Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

1. Letters between Childe and Franz Boas. The letters concern the acquisition of books for the Royal Anthropological Institute.

Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, California 94720

1. Letters between Childe and Robert Lowie. These letters concern Childe's teaching schedule and accommodations at Berkeley where he taught during the 1939 summer session.

2. Letters between Alfred Kroeber and Childe. These concern the concept of culture and its importance to archaeological and anthropological theory

Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan
1150 Beal Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

1. Letters between Childe and Marston Bates. The letters concern Bates compliments of Man Makes Himself and Childe's response.

2. Letters between Childe and Leslie A. White. Letters range from early 1940s until 1955. The letters are concerned with a wide variety of topics largely concerned with anthropological theories such as the concept of culture, diffusion and history. The letters also detail Childe's interest in trying to visit the States in the 1940s and 1950s.

Braidwood, Robert
c/o Oriental Institute
University of Chicago
1155 East 55th St
Chicago, Ill. 60637

1. Letters between Childe and Robert Braidwood principally concern Childe's involvement as the technical advisor for the required readings for University of Chicago students. There are also references to Childe's aborted efforts to enter the United States in the 1940s and 1950s. Other general topics are addressed such as the importance of the concept of culture, Russian scholarship and the meaning of history.

National Anthropological Archives
National Museum of Natural History
Smithsonian Institute
Washington, D.C. 20560

1. Letters between Childe and Carelton Coon. These concern Childe's comments on Coon's research which culminated in the publication of The Races of Europe. More generally, Childe letters are filled with detailed comments about the state of European archaeology.

2. Letters between Childe and Ales Hrdlicka. Letters concern a lecture Hrdlicka gave in New York in 1936 which Childe attended.

3. Letters between Childe and Frank Setzler. These concern the identification of artifact that were to be put on exhibit at the Smithsonian.

Peabody Museum
Harvard University
11 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

1. Letters between Childe and Hugh Hencken. These letters concern a host of issues such as the Harvard University Expedition to Northern Ireland in 1935 where Hencken, Movius and Childe excavated. Childe also deposited rough drafts of his book The Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles with Movius in 1939 in case of a German invasion of Britain.

2. Letters between Childe and Earnest Hooton. These letters concern Childe's impression of Harvard and the United States in the late 1930s. There is also reference to the 1939 Worlds Fair.

3. Letters between Childe and Hallam Movius. Aside from the White letters in the Bentley Historic Library, this is the most extensive collections of letters Childe exchanged with an American scholar. The letters range from 1935 until Childe's death. A host of issues are discussed ranging from detailed discussion of European archaeology, to theoretical concerns and aborted visits to the United States.

Oregon Special Collections
University of Oregon Library
Eugene, Oregon 97403

1. Letters between Benjamin Farrington and Bernhard Stern. These concern the attempted publication of the series of books Past and Present in the United States. Farrington and Stern were on the editorial board as was Childe whose volume History was blacklisted in the States. These letters provide detailed information about the degree to which scholars were affected by the Cold War.

England:**Bodleian Library:**

Department of Western Manuscripts
Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BG

1. Letters between Childe and O.G.S. Crawford. Letters range from late 1930s until Childe's death in 1957. These letters are undoubtedly the most personal of any letters Childe wrote that have been preserved in an archive. They clearly reflect how close Crawford and Childe were. The majority of the letters concern matters dealing with the publication of Antiquity to which Childe made many and regular contributions. Childe's views on the more personal aspects of his scholarship can be interpreted when one reads between the lines of their correspondence. In the year 2005 more letters will be opened to scholars as a significant portion of Crawford's correspondence from the mid-1950s is still not available.

2. Correspondence between Childe and Gilbert Murray. These letters provide the most detailed record of Childe's activities in socialist politics while he was a student at Oxford. They were primarily written between 1914 and 1922. Childe details his persecution at the hands of Australian authorities and unequivocally states his opinion about World War I and the anti-conscriptionist movement.

3. Correspondence between Childe and John L. Myres. These letters contain diverse topics, ranging from Childe's request for letters of recommendation to detailed discussions of Myres' and Childe's archaeological work. The letters range from 1914 until the month before their deaths in 1957. A host of archaeological topics are discussed and the best direct evidence of Childe's strong antifascist works before and during World War II can be found.

Institute of Archaeology
 University of London
 31-34 Gordon Square
 London WC1H 0PY

This is the largest repository of Childe's written work. The holdings are immense, totally uncatalogued, and in some cases, in a bad state of repair. Nonetheless, the material housed at the Institute provides scholars with the largest and most detailed record of Childe's scholarship. The most important research material includes the following items but are not by any means limited to what I include.

1. Correspondence between Childe and a host of scholars in the United States, England, Australia and Europe.

2. Childe's field books from virtually all his excavations. Although Childe's excavations were rumored to be quite poor, his notebooks taken in the field are detailed and clearly illustrate he was at worst a competent field archaeologist. Within the pages of these books one can also find notes he took from various books he was reading while in the field, for example, when excavating in Northern Ireland between 1930 and 1935 one finds detailed writings on functionalism which he was to incorporate into his theoretical writings.

3. There are 66 volumes of notebooks which reflect what Childe read throughout his career. Again, there is precious little organization to these notes yet it does provide a glimmer at what Childe was working on when compared to his dated and published works.

4. In accordance with Childe's wishes, after his death his own personal library was incorporated into the Institute's collection. In most cases his name is located on a given book's inside cover and one can find his own notes within the margins of dozens of books. Many books are also inscribed by the authors with Childe's commentary underneath.

5. The various drafts of all of Childe's books are collected with his revisions which were presumably sent to various publishers. Thus all six editions of The Dawn of European Civilization and the four editions of The Most Ancient East can be found and clearly illustrate the gradual change in Childe's thought as it pertained to European prehistory. Page proofs and

earlier drafts of books such as his popular books Man Makes Himself and What Happened in History also illustrate how Childe was always revising his published work. Letters to and from publisher regarding royalties and the number of copies his books sold can also be found interspersed with his editorial comments.

6. Foreign editions of Childe's books are collected and include copies in virtually every European language. Many of these books contain extended introductions by foreign scholars with Childe's comments on their analysis of his work. Most interestingly are copies in Russian and Chinese, the former has extensive notes by Childe.

7. Miscellaneous materials include Childe's datebook from 1937 until his death. Notes from various trips to countries around the world. There are also recollections of various students and letters describing the sort of person Childe was.

Marx Memorial Library
37a Clerkenwell Green
London EC1R 0DU

1. Letters between Childe and R. Palme Dutt. These letters contain the most personal comments by Childe and have numerous and important references to his political beliefs.

2. The Bernal papers are extensive yet yield little personal insight on Childe beliefs; however, rough drafts of Man Makes Himself and other works written by Childe in the 1930s that were never published show the evolution of his thought as it pertains to his popular writings.

Oxford University
Queens College
Bond Street
Oxford OX2 CBG

1. Just one document survives which regards Childe's drilling with civilians while he was an undergraduate. Unfortunately his dissertation has not been preserved.

Australia

University of Sydney
Sydney 2006
New South Wales

1. A small collection of letters are housed in the university genneral archives. All letters deal with Childe's activities in the anti-conscription movement.

Department of Defense
Directorship of Militray Intelligence
Censorship Reports MP95/1
Austrlian Archives Office
Melbourne

1. This collection of letters, reports, and observations by department of defense observers contains the most extensive repository of Childe's activities between 1917 and 1922.